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MURPHYS,

Queen of The Sierra

A History of Murphys, Calaveras County, California

By

RICHARD COKE WOOD

Published by

CALAVERAS CALIFORNIAN

Angels Camp, California

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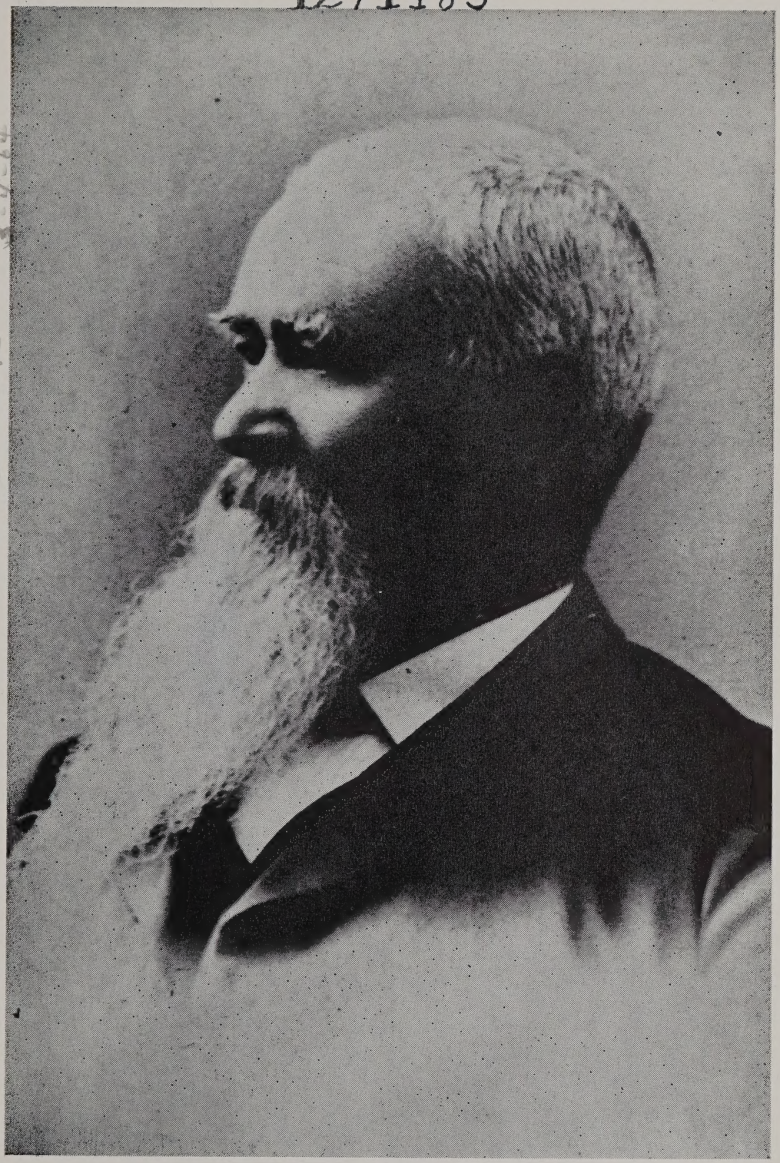

John Murphy, for whom the town of Murphys was named.

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PREFACE

For several years I have had in mind the idea of writing a history of Murphys, but it was not until plans were being made for the Centennial Celebration that I seriously started to work writing up my notes. Murphys has a romantic past that should be of interest to a great many people other than those who have lived in the region. In this book I have tried to bring back that past for the enjoyment of the present generation. I'm not so optimistic as to think I could avoid errors. Much of the material has been obtained from personal interviews with the old-timers, and some of the stories are conflicting. I have tried to compromise these stories as far as possible. I have tried to check dates and facts as closely as possible and have had several others read the manuscript for the purpose of catching errors. Also, I'm sure that I have left out things that should have been told, but I have tried to tell the significant events in the history of Murphys. Perhaps someone else will have the time and ambition to tell the rest of the story.

I have used Murphys rather than Murphy's all the way through for the sake of consistency. In the early days the town was known as Murphy's Camp, but because there were several other Murphy's and Murphy's Camp in the United States, the post office department dropped the apostrophe "s" and the "camp" to simply Murphy. However, many of the old-timers objected to this usage and refused to write Murphy. Therefore, in 1933, when E. Mitchler became postmaster, he asked the post office department to change the name back to Murphys, but without the apostrophe. Now everyone is happy.

The title, *Murphys, Queen of the Sierra,* was first used in a reference to Murphys in the *San Joaquin Republican,* November 13, 1852. It, therefore, seemed to be an appropriate title for this book.

The sketch of the old Sperry's Hotel on the front cover was drawn by Mrs. Dave Matthews. She, also, drew the sketches of the suspension flume and the Deep Cut from lithographed sketches made by Edward Vischer in 1859.

This book is a community project. It could not have been written without the kind cooperation of so many who took time to tell me what they knew of the past or took time to obtain information for me. I'm deeply grateful for all this help. I want to especially thank the following: Mrs. Eva Stephens, Tony Malaspina, Gene Gardella, Ed True, Fred Fisk, Fred Kenny, and Al Gianelli.

And for reading the text and making suggestions for improvement, I wish to thank Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Scoles, Judge J. A. Smith, and Dr. Rockwell D. Hunt. However, they are not in any way responsible for the errors, but should be given credit for whatever merit the book possesses.

DISCOVERY

Long before the white man came to the little valley where Murphys is now situated, it was recognized for its charm by the Indians, who related that it had been a gathering place for tribesmen from as far away as Nevada. There were four *rancherias* of Miwok Indians, with a population of around four hundred, when the white miners first came. For many years annual powwows were held on the ridge north of Murphys at which the Indians danced, carried on sports, and traded among themselves.

Probably the first white man to pass through the little valley or its immediate vicinity, was Jedediah Smith, the famous explorer and trapper, who had come into California by the southern route. In May, 1827, after exploring the San Joaquin Valley and the foothills of the Sierra, he decided to return to his base in the Salt Lake region by a northerly route, and, according to some of the latest studies, he must have passed through what is now Angels and Murphys, and crossed the mountains over what is now known as Ebberts Pass.[1]

Many historians credit the Murphy brothers, John and Daniel, with doing the first mining in Murphys Flat. Some of the old-timers claim that even before Marshall discovered gold, these brothers had been in the valley on trading expeditions and found the Indian women wearing quills from large feathers filled with gold nuggets. However, the Murphys were probably not the first to mine the flat but a man named Staudenberg and others who evidently were members of the Murphy's party.[2]

The town established here was first called Stoutenberg, as the election returns of November, 1849, are recorded to be from the Stoutenberg precinct,[3] the name undoubtedly being a corruption of Staudenberg.

When this first party arrived in Murphys Flat, they found an old Mexican and his wife digging in a hole at the foot of a large pine tree on a small knoll. They had dug up a large amount of gold, estimated at approximately $18,000.[4] When the Americans arrived, the Mexicans hastily took their gold and left the valley.

The Douglas party, after whom Douglas Flat is named, was also on the flat very early; but the burden of evidence credits Staudenberg with being the first to mine in the valley.

The Murphys must have come into the region in August or September of 1848. They had been with Captain Weber's Stockton Mining Company, on Weber Creek near Placerville, and John Murphy had run a trading post in a lean-to in partnership with Weber.[5] When mining in that region no longer paid three ounces per day, the miners considered it unprofitable and moved to other regions. Therefore, in August, 1848, a party of miners, including James Carson, George Angel, and the Murphy brothers made their way south into the Calaveras County region.[6] They mined all the streams on the way south, including Dry Creek, Sutter Creek, Mokelumne River, and the Calaveras River, finding gold in almost every one of them. When they reached the stream now known as Angels Creek, George Angel stopped to mine and a little later set up a trading tent on the location which became Angels Camp. Carson, with a small party, continued south a few miles and mined on what is now called Carson Creek, where, in ten days, each man took out an average of 180 ounces of gold. The Murphy's party went easterly towards the Stanislaus River, mining first at Vallecito and then making their way northerly up Coyote Creek to the valley which shortly became known as Murphys Camp. Vallecito was then called Murphys "Old Diggings," and the mines to the north were Murphys "New Diggings." Later the Mexicans changed the name of the "Old Diggings" to Vallecito. The "New Diggings" soon became known as Murphys Rich Diggings, then Murphys Flat and later Murphys Camp. However, as it has been pointed out, Staudenberg and a few miners worked the area first, and it was only after John Murphy came in and set up a trading tent that the area became known as Murphy's Diggings.[7]

John Murphy, although only twenty-three years old at the time, knew how to handle the Indians and was successful in getting them to mine for him by paying them in merchandise from his trading tent, but, according to report, not always giving them full value for the gold. The *San Andreas Independent,* September 18, 1858, carries a story called "Reminiscences of 1848," in which the writer states:

> "Only a few days previous to our arrival an Indian had found a five-pound lump of gold for which Murphy had given him a blanket."

At that rate of profit, it is quite obvious why John Murphy at one time had more gold dust in his possession than any other man on the Pacific Coast.[8] Bright blankets and red shirts were not the only inducements which John used on the Indians to get them to dig gold for him, however. Bancroft quotes from one who visited this region in October, 1848:

> "The camp of Mr. Murphy is in the midst of a small tribe of wild Indians, who gather gold for him, and receive in return provisions and blankets. He knocks down two bullocks a day to furnish meat. They respect his person and property in part due to the fact that he has married the daughter of the chief."[9]

Besides feeding them well, giving them bright cloth and trinkets, and marrying the chief's daughter,[10] John kept liquor away from the Indians. When Rev. Walter Colton visited the mines in October, 1848, he states:

> "I was told by Mr. Murphy that he allowed no liquor in the camp. He said a trader brought in a barrel of rum a few days before, and he gave him exactly five minutes to decide whether he would quit the grounds or have the head of the barrel knocked in. He took his fire-curse to some other place."[11]

The success of his relationship with the Indians is demonstrated by the fact that several sources say that with the aid of the Indians, John Murphy took out $1,500,000 in gold from Murphys Flat the fall and winter of 1848.[12] Another source says that when John Murphy left the mines in December, 1849, he had as much gold as six mules could haul from the camp, it amounting to seventeen hides (pouches) full of gold dust. Walsh says, "John Murphy took two million dollars in gold from the Murphys Diggings in about a year's time."[13]

The placer mines in Murphys were the richest in the Calaveras County region, with the possible exception of Dry Creek. When the news of their richness spread around, the miners rushed in. The claims were limited to eight feet square, and the addition of a partner enlarged the claim to eight feet by twelve. The "take" averaged $3,000 for the first season—the summer of 1849. A Frenchman took out $7,000 in the summer and wet season.[14] One miner realized $80,000 from his work the first winter.[15] Five

million dollars were taken from a four-acre placer area.[16] Hand-panning was the only method used in washing until late fall when a new invention of rockers and cradles was introduced from Wood's Creek in what was later to become Tuolumne County. An *ounce to the pan* was rather common, and four or five ounces to the pan was not unusual when mining on what was called the lava ledge. Many of the claims paid *sixteen ounces* to the pan.[17] Gold was found at the depth of from four to ten feet.

At first the miners were too busy digging for gold to put up cabins or houses. They camped in the open or in brush lean-to's, although some had tents. In the summer of 1849 enough miners were working in the area to attract several merchants, and four trading tents were doing good business. They belonged to Doctors Brown and Wilson, Connell, Daly Brothers, and Major Richard Roman (later State Treasurer and candidate for Lieutenant Governor in 1849). No mention is made of the Murphys trading post in this source or of Staudenberg, but we know they were both in the vicinity.[18]

Heavy rains came early in the fall of 1849, and the miners who had crowded in from all sides to stake out claims could do nothing but mark the placers which were to be worked in the summer. Gerstacher, who came to Murphys in April, 1850, says:

> "To prevent abuse, the American diggers called a meeting in which it was resolved that no one should have a larger placer—and only one to his name—than sixteen feet long and eight feet broad, with a space of two and one-half feet around it for throwing dirt. Such a claim might be registered for a fee of two dollars with the Alcalde, in which case it should be valid until August, 1850, and no longer."[19]

The camp in the fall of 1849 was mostly made up of tents, but the miners had organized a government and elected an alcalde,[20] sheriff, and constable. There were about fifty tents by this time, two or three blockhouses, and a house built of planks; yet, according to Gerstacher, the little town boasted as many "bars" as tents. Also, business was expanding as there were three American and four French dining rooms, two doctors' shops, and at least twenty gambling tables.

When Gerstacher arrived in April, 1850, the population of Murphys had reached 1,200,[21] and it seemed to him that every

Indian Round Houses in the rancheria on the ridge north of Murphys—destroyed by fire in 1922.

inch of space on the flat had been mined. Here is his description of the camp:

> "There was a woody plain in the midst of which a small town arose, a broad street of large store tents extended along the middle of the flat where not only the necessary provisions and unnecessary drinks might be had, but also, real articles of luxury. The main street being thus solely occupied by the different stores and shops, a mass of small blockhouses and tents lay behind them, scattered as far as the next range of hills. The stately pines and leafy oaks—the green underwood from which the white and blue tops of the tents were peeping forth—the high and finely wooded mountains, the busy life on all sides—with the flag of the United States fluttering from the tents, made an impression upon me which I shall never attempt to describe. I could have hardly chosen for my abode a more beautiful spot in the whole world."[22]

He found that a post office had just been established, and a man appointed to go to San Francisco once a month to bring the mail. This carrier was given the names of those expecting mail, and he waited in line at the general delivery window in San Francisco for it, as a post office box was four dollars a month. Each letter cost one dollar besides the postage. A good deal of gold was shipped by this post-contractor until he absconded with the gold on one of his trips.

Gerstacher found the Murphys mines overcrowded and didn't have any success. He says gold was to be found, but the majority of the diggers didn't find it; therefore, by August, 1850, the miners began to leave a place where it was impossible to make even a day's wages. The storekeepers had crowded in, and Murphys was now a little town, but what would happen if the miners left? Methods had to be devised to keep the miners there, and with the assistance of the alcalde, Major Wyatt, who profited to the extent of two dollars for each claim registered, a man named Fletcher was hired to locate gold veins with his goldometer. He was willing to wager $100 that he could locate a bag of gold that someone might hide. He marked out ten or twelve holes where gold could be found at the depth of twenty-five feet. When no gold was found at that depth, they were told to dig to thirty-five feet. Fletcher left

camp before that level was reached. The miners soon realized the deception and began to leave in large numbers. Gerstacher decided to try his luck at "Macolome."

Despite Gerstacher's experience, there were great sums of gold yet to be dug out of Murphys Flat. The *San Joaquin Republican,* March 10, 1852, reports, "at Murphys the miners are making from twenty to fifty dollars a day." The September 25 issue reports:

> "At Murphys many of the deep claims pay as high as three or four thousand dollars to the wagonload of earth, and but few less than fifty dollars to the cart-load. This camp is destined to become one of the most important placers in the southern mines. It is now a large and substantially built town and is daily on the increase. The flats and hillsides and gulches for many miles around are staked off for winter digging."

By November 13, 1852, the reporter for the *San Joaquin Republican* notes that as Murphys was now a town of some note it had dropped the "camp" and was known as "Murphys." He also observes that some fifteen families had moved into the settlement, and the softening influence of women was having its effect upon the men's coarse natures. He further states:

> "The sun of Murphy's greatness has but just risen; a short time and she will take the sceptre of the mountain queen. The city has upwards of 500 frame houses, large and substantially built, and a permanent and floating population of nearly 3,000. Mr. P. Birmingham is constructing a large three-story hotel, and it is rumored it will have mattresses and blankets void of fleas. The town contains eight taverns besides private boarding houses; two restaurants; one express and banking house; one livery stable; seven blacksmith shops; nine carpenter shops; four bakeries; five butcher shops and markets; two steam sawmills; one cider and syrup factory; one bowling alley, besides dance and drinking houses innumerable."

In January, 1853, the Union Water Canal was completed to Murphys and the mines became more active than ever before, as there had been a great scarcity of water with which to wash the gravel during a part of the year. Now, with plenty of water, the

diggings could accommodate a great many more miners, and it was during these next few years that the population in the vicinity of Murphys reached 5,000.

The Peregrine Pilgrim, writing in the *Daily Alta California* a year later, June 24, 1853, states:

> "This section of the country is supplied with water by the Union Water Company which has a fine large ditch now in successful operation and paying finely to the stockholders. In this neighborhood I have heard of more large strikes than in any other. At Murphys there are a good many claims paying so well that they speak of pounds of gold they take out rather than ounces."

MINING LAWS

When gold was discovered by James Marshall at Coloma in January, 1848, California had no law except military law and the remains of the Mexican laws. Technically, the new mines should have been governed by the Mexican laws in regard to mineral wealth and mining, but very few of the Americans knew anything about the Mexican system of government and cared less. To complicate matters, there was a tremendous rush to California—it is estimated from 90,000 to 100,000 in 1849—and Congress, embroiled in the controversy over slavery, was unable to take any action to provide even a territorial form of government for California.

The miners, however, soon found themselves involved in controversies over sizes and locations of claims, and it became necessary to establish some rules by which orderly mining could be carried out. Therefore, each locality began to make its own mining laws. The first of these laws formulated in California was probably written by Colonel Stevenson of the New York Volunteers, for a group of his men who were mining on the Mokelumne River. With these as models, each mining locality drew up mining laws suitable to the problems of their mines.

When the state legislature was organized in December, 1849, one of its first acts was to pass legislation giving to these district mining laws the legal status of state laws and making them enforceable in the courts. It was not until 1866, however, that Congress got around to passing any legislation in regard to mining, and in this and subsequent legislation the laws were based upon and supported the local district mining laws. These district laws were important, and the miners were all interested in the enforcement of them.

At Carson Hill in 1851, a dispute arose between two factions, the Finnegan group and the Morgan group, over how large a quartz claim should be. All the previous mining laws of the district had dealt with placer mining, and so when William Hance discovered rich quartz gold on Carson Hill in 1850, the miners felt that the old placer mining laws were not suitable for this new type of mining. They met and made laws that seemed suitable for the situation. According to these rules the Morgan Company could claim 1,000 feet on the Hill, but Morgan and Company wanted

1,700 feet, all of the Hill. The first trial of this famous case in 1851, was in Judge Putney's court in Murphys, with a jury of miners.[23] The decision was in favor of the Finnegan group. A short time later, Morgan appealed the case to Judge Smith's County Court at Jackson and the decision was reversed and Morgan re-established in control of the mine. Even though the decision was by the courts, the miners of Murphys and Angels Camp felt that injustice had been done, and forced the Morgan Company out of the mines on the Hill and put it back in the hands of the Finnegan group. The miners made these laws, interpreted them, and enforced them.

The miners of Murphys found it especially necessary to make laws regulating claims because of the richness of the gravel. It has been mentioned that in the first season claims were limited to eight feet square by the local regulations and later the limit was increased to eight by sixteen feet. These laws were in effect and enforced at first by the alcalde with whom the claims were registered, and later, when the state government was organized, by the justice of the peace and the constable. These laws were revised and amended from time to time as mining conditions changed.

The *San Joaquin Republican,* November 13, 1852, carried the following item praising the mining laws of Murphys:

> "The mining laws of Murphys are the corner stone and model for the government of the mineral lands of California. Thousands of cubic feet of human gas has been expended in blowing about the mineral lands of California, while the whole subject is in a nut-shell in the mining laws of the Murphys District. The press of California cannot in any way throw more light on the miners' views on the subject than to publish from time to time the miners' laws of Murphys Camp."

By October, 1857, so many new conditions existed in Murphys District that the miners felt the laws of the district should be completely revised and rewritten. Therefore, a meeting was called and the following laws were agreed upon:

MINING LAWS—MURPHYS DISTRICT

Adopted October 26, 1857

Preamble: Whereas, we deem it necessary for our better government and protection to adopt a new code of laws. Therefore,

we, the miners of Murphys District in Mass Convention assembled this 26th day of October, 1857, do enact as follows:

ARTICLE I

Section 1. The boundaries of Murphys District shall be as follows: Commencing at the head of Angels Creek, and running in a southerly direction to Kiota Creek, thence in a westerly direction along the dividing ridge, between Power's Ranch and Missouri Gulch, from thence along the south side of Central Hill, to the southwest corner of Hart's Ranch, from thence in a direct line across Angel's Creek to the dividing ridge between Indian Gulch and San Domingo Creek, thence including San Domingo Cap, from thence in an easterly direction along the ridge of the head of San Domingo Creek and back to the place of beginning.

Section 2. A mining claim in any new ground in placer diggings shall not exceed 100 feet square, and in old or abandoned diggings 100 feet wide by 150 feet in length.

Section 3. Every miner shall be entitled to take up and hold two claims, in the following manner: One dry claim and one wet or water claim. The dry claim shall be worked whenever water can be obtained at the usual prices, and a wet or water claim from the 20th of May to the 20th of November, inclusive of each and every year.

Section 4. All claims shall be worked immediately after the expiration of three days from the time of taking up or purchase of the same, and if left unworked for more than three days, at any one time shall be forfeited. This shall apply to all claims when workable.

Section 5. Companies of miners having a claim each, and work one only of said claims, the balance of their claims shall hold good. But this law shall not be considered to allow a part of a company to hold the claims of the whole company, during the absence of a part of its members.

Section 6. All claims shall be duly marked and bounded, with at least one notice placed in a conspicuous place with the names of all its claimants, thereon, and stakes at each corner of the claim. The owners of claims whenever called upon to show their boundaries, shall do so.

Section 7. All claims, whether obtained by pre-emption, purchase or otherwise, shall be represented in person, or by proxy, and worked in conformity with the laws herein prescribed.

ARTICLE II

Section 1. No member of a company shall absent himself and work elsewhere, without giving his co-partners due notice, and also provide the money or means to have his share fully represented, in accordance with the customary usages and laws of miners, and in default thereof, he shall forfeit his rights, share or interest in said company.

Section 2. Whenever a member of a company shall provide a substitute to work in his place, or have his interest fully represented, he shall do so agreeably to the rules of said company.

Section 3. No miner shall be obliged to represent his claim in case of sickness or attending at court, either as witness or juror, and any claim not represented at such times, shall hold good.

Section 4. No person shall hold more than one wet and one dry claim by right of pre-emption, and if found holding more than one wet and one dry claim by pre-emption, he shall forfeit all. But these laws recognize the privilege, and will protect the right of pre-emption, and hold more by right of purchase, Provided: they keep men at work on them, according to the laws of the district.

ARTICLE III

Section 1. When any miner or company of miners, shall deem it to their advantage to cut tail races, run tunnels or make improvements of any kind, by passing through the claims of any company, they shall, in all cases, have the privilege of so doing, Provided: always that it shall not be to the injury of the claims through which they pass.

Section 2. When any company shall be employed in making improvements for the better working of their claims, the said claims shall hold good during the time that such improvements are in operation.

Section 3. Companies prospecting shall be entitled to work that number of hands they shall think proper until they have struck pay dirt.

Section 4. Any person making discovery of new diggings, shall be entitled to one extra claim of one hundred feet, but this shall not apply in any case to old diggings.

ARTICLE IV

Section 1. A claim for tunneling or shafting purposes, shall be 100 feet on the lead, and in width, the width of lead by the same, more or less, with all its dips, curves and angles.

Section 2. All tunneling claims shall be governed by the laws regulating placer mining.

Section 3. A claim on a quartz lead shall not exceed 140 feet on the lead by 200 feet in width, with all its dips, curves, and angles.

Section 4. Miners locating quartz claims shall have twelve days allowed them for recording of the same at the county seat, and from the time of recording four months for prospecting the same, after the expiration of which time, they shall be governed by the laws regulating placer mining.

Section 5. All laws passed heretofore that conflict with these, are hereby repealed.

These laws were printed in the San Andreas *Independent* Nov. 7, 1857.

The Deep Cut constructed in 1859 for the purpose of draining the flat.

WATER

Water is as important to the miner as it is to the farmer, and the miners of Murphys Flat soon discovered they must obtain water if their mines were to be developed. The lovely creek rushing down through the center of Murphys today, with a constant flow the year round, did not exist in 1849. Mention has been made already of a few springs on the flat that furnished water for the cooking purposes of the miners, and, by placing dams around this flow of water, a small pond was created which served as a washing-out place for the miners' gravel. This, obviously, was not adequate for the large number of miners that had flocked into the diggings by 1850, and the energetic miners began a search for a more satisfactory source of supply.

They found that the Stanislaus River would give them the water they needed, but, in order to reach Murphys with the water, it must be taken from the Stanislaus some fifteen miles higher up in the mountains. To construct an aqueduct that distance over such mountainous terrain required courage, skill, and capital, but apparently the miners of Murphys had all of these requirements. Twenty-five Murphys residents organized the Union Water Company in 1851, with a capitalization at first of $200,000, but this was later increased to $250,000,[24] for the purpose of bringing water from the Stanislaus to Murphys Flat.

T. J. Matteson, who had come to Murphys in 1849 and established a stage line from Murphys to Angels in 1850, was a surveyor and was employed to survey the route of the canal.[25] A number of construction camps were set up along the line of construction, each building a section. No modern day equipment of bulldozers and power shovels were available, and the work was largely done by pick and shovel, in some places with aid of mules and plow. Box conduits or flumes had to be built to carry the water across gorges and depressions, sometimes above the tree tops. The ditch and flumes were from four to five feet wide and could take 10,000 inches of water from the north fork of the Stanislaus. Dams had to be built to form reservoirs. One of these was built of wood by a Captain Hanford, who was County Clerk from 1859-61. In order to supply the wood for this and for the wooden flumes and trestles, a special sawmill was built about eight miles from Murphys.

This mill was later moved higher up to about fifteen miles from Murphys. In order to bring logs to this mill, a three-mile-long railway was built. Mules were the tractive force used in dragging the logs. In order to supply the construction crews with fresh meat along the line, hunters were employed to bring in wild game. While one of these hunters, A. T. Dowd, was following a wounded grizzly bear, he discovered the Calaveras Grove of the Big Trees in 1852.

The fifteen miles of canal were pushed to completion in the latter part of 1852, and water was brought into Murphys in January, 1853. There was great rejoicing among the miners, for now the future of their mines was assured.

The Union Water Company was a profitable investment from the beginning and soon was paying four per cent monthly dividends. The canals were eventually extended to over ninety miles, and the communities of Vallecito, Douglas, Angels Camp, Carson Hill, and Altaville were supplied with water.

Riley Senter, who had come to Calaveras County in 1849, was one of the original investors in the company and was employed as the first superintendent at $180 a month. In a letter to his cousin in New York, in 1853, he says:

> "We expected the (aqueduct) to cost a large amount of money, but were not prepared for the amount it did cost. We were a year in getting it so far advanced as to commence paying, and from that time to this, it has been necessary to keep large numbers of men employed in extending and bringing into use that for which we had worked for nearly a year previously. Upon getting the water, we found ourselves deeply in debt to men for labor and to others for materials furnished.
>
> "It has cost us more than $150,000. I have a 25th, about $6,000, invested in it. Since the first of the month, I have been in the employ of the company with a salary equal to $180 a month and board.
>
> "The business is such a one as I like. It amounts to from $10,000 to $20,000 a month, varying from $12,000 to $15,000 generally a month. Our receipts since the first of January have been over $50,000. This may look like a great sum to you, and it is."[26]

With this new supply of water, mining in the Murphys area took on renewed life. The water was not only used in the flat, but the north ditch and the south ditch were constructed to take water all around the little valley. The south ditch furnished water for the mines in Missouri Gulch which parallels the Kenney Ranch road, and Pennsylvania Gulch which crosses it near the Kenney Ranch house, and for the gravel mines in Douglas and Vallecito. The north ditch furnished water for the Owlsburg district which was the gulch extending north from Murphys to the present Oro Plata Mine, and for the Central Hill Mine District south of Murphys.[27]

Large quantities of gold were washed out of the gravel in the Murphys district during the next ten years. This placer mining period was the greatest in the history of Murphys. Judge John M. Shepherd, who was the first white child born in Murphys on May 25, 1852, in a speech made at the dedication of the historical monument in Murphys in October, 1939, stated that after the Union Water was introduced "the thundering herd came on and peopled Murphys to overflow."

After going to so much work and expense to bring the water to Murphys, the miners soon found that they had too much water. The limestone bedrock at the lower end of the valley was higher than bedrock farther back in the flat and acted as a dam. The mines became flooded, preventing the miners from digging down to bedrock. It was a problem no one miner could handle himself, and so a meeting was called to discuss the problem and the possibility of forming an organization to drain the flat. Efforts had been made to drain the area through the old creek bed, but this was unsuccessful. Therefore, it was decided that a cut would have to be made through the bedrock limestone from thirty-five to forty feet in depth. This cut would not only drain the flat of excess water, but it would make it easier for the miners to run off the tailings or waste from their sluices. The dirt had to be hoisted by horse or steam power, a height of fifteen or twenty feet to the sluices in order to drain the tailings into the wooden flume in use at that time. Edward Vischer, who visited Murphys in May, 1859, and made a sketch of the deep cut and derricks used in hoisting the gravel, says the derricks looked like the masts of ships and gave the impression of shipping in a busy harbor.

The construction of the cut was a gigantic undertaking for men with little capital, but the resourcefulness of the miners of Murphys had already been proven. A corporation was founded which was called the Murphys Flat Fluming Company, in September, 1857. Its existence should extend for fifty years. The capital stock at the beginning was to be $30,000 divided into 300 working shares at $100 per share. This capital was later increased to $50,000 with about fifty stockholders. The officers of the corporation were James Stiver, President; Edward Burrow, Secretary; Volney Shearer, Superintendent. F. G. McDonald, James Pearson, James L. Sperry, Wm. W. Lapham, P. L. Traver, Wellington Fay, Chas. Murphy, and D. L. Cory, were stockholders and signed for incorporation.[28]

The Deep Cut, as it was sometimes called, or the Bedrock Flume, was almost completed in 1859, although extension work was carried on until 1860. The distance of the flume when completed was about 4,000 feet, and it extended from the Owlsburg district back of the present Masonic Temple to the canyon at the lower end of the flat. A great portion of the canal was through limestone, cut to a depth of thirty-seven feet, with a width of from eight to thirty-four at the top and six feet at the bottom. The rock was drilled by hand, blasted with black powder, and raised to the banks by means of derricks and horsepower. The great piles of rocks just below the town still tell the story of the tremendous amount of work involved.

After the cut was completed, a wooden flume three and a half feet wide and three feet deep was placed at the bottom of the cut. During a large part of the two years required to complete the work, as many as fifty men were employed.[29] The total cost of construction was about $100,000.[30]

This cut was not deep enough to solve the water problem completely as many of the mines were seventy feet deep; although the difference of thirty-five feet made it considerably easier to reach bedrock, the miners were not able to reach it in all places and some of the claims have never been worked to that depth. The pay was good in the dirt down to bedrock,[31] and the additional returns from the mines paid the miners many times over for their investment and efforts.

Several times each year the Union Water Company furnished the miners with a large head of water to wash the tailings from the flume which had accumulated from the sluices. Any gold that

escaped the miners in the sluices was caught in the flume. In January, 1862, a heavy storm did a great deal of damage in Calaveras County. Murphys was isolated for many days by the washing out of all bridges and high water. The Union Water Company works suffered severely. The dam on Mill Creek was washed out, several hundred feet of fluming was destroyed, and considerable damage was done to the ditches. The mining claims on Murphys Flat were damaged by being filled up with debris, and the Deep Cut was completely filled up with sediment and sand.[32] It must have required great effort and expense to repair the damage and clean out the cut. However, it was restored to good working order and used for many years.[33]

Another superb engineering achievement for which the miners of Murphys was noted throughout the state during the 1850's, was the construction of the suspension flume across the canyon at the lower end of the valley. Its purpose was to carry water from the north ditch of the Union Water Company to the Central Hill Mine, located on a ridge one mile south of Murphys. The flume was built on the penstock, or water-tight box principle, and was held up with two wire suspension cables one and a half inches in diameter and one thousand feet long, with two guy cables to support the towers over which the cables were strung. The northern tower was ninety-four feet high and the southern tower 124 feet high. The distance from tower to tower was 740 feet. The cables were firmly anchored at the ends in the bedrock. Perpendicularly from the flume down to the bed of the creek, it was 290 feet. The box would carry fifty inches of water.[34]

The Central Hill Mining Company consisted of ten men, all from Maine, each owning a working share in the company. The construction of the flume was contracted to the firm of Emery and Company, who completed it in three months. The cost was $6,000, of which $4,500 was spent for materials, and $1,500 was the premium offered for the difficult task of suspending the boxes.[35] Two men carried out this difficult work in two days. While one of them slid along a cable in a cage, the other fastened the wire ends to the main cable. The flume was completed and the first water ran through to Central Hill on November 11, 1857.

Casual observers unable to see the wiring from the canyon floor, declared the flume seemed to be fragile and unsupported even though it was solidly constructed and anchored. However, the

winds coming up the canyon in an unusually violent storm in December, 1859, blew down the box, leaving the suspension cable and towers undamaged. The Central Hill operators decided to substitute iron pipe in place of the flume. This was suspended by the same cables which supported the flume. Eight hundred feet of piping, tapering from a 25-inch diameter at the mouth, to a ten-inch diameter at the outlet, and costing $1.40 per foot, was used. This piping was much cheaper than the flume and was sturdier. However, it was also damaged by the wind and storms and was eventually replaced by a siphon or iron pipe which went down into the canyon and crossed over the creek just a few feet above it. This was much less expensive and difficult to keep in operation and was used until the Central Hill was closed in 1898. Part of the siphon was obtained by Calaveras County and cut up and used for culverts, but much of it is still buried in the canyon wall.

Another flume built on a trestle to carry water from the south ditch to the Ohio or Uptograph Gravel Mine in Douglas Flat passed through Murphys. While it was not as spectacular as the suspension flume, it was about 1,000 feet long and in places was about fifty feet in height. It was in operation during the 80's and 90's and was torn down after the Ohio Mine was closed in 1892. The flume paralleled the present south ditch along the east and south side of Murphys, but was much higher and crossed the Vallecito road about three hundred yards south of the Murphys school house.[36] Buckminster, foreman for Uptograph at the Ohio Mine, was in charge of constructing the flume.

The suspension flume constructed across the canyon below town in 1857.

MINING IN THE LATER PERIOD

The most important mining period in the history of Murphys was during the period of placer mining in the 'fifties and 'sixties. Quartz mining never was an important factor in the Murphys region as it was in Angels, although during a later period there were some important mines in the East Belt of the Mother Lode, as this region was called.

After the Union Water Ditch reached Murphys in 1853, mining was expanded, and Murphys reached its peak in population and mining activity. There is no way of knowing how much gold was taken out of the flat and adjoining regions. It is claimed that Wells, Fargo and Company shipped out $15,000,000 in gold dust over a period of ten years.[37] This cannot be verified as the records of the company were lost in the San Francisco fire of 1906. The plaque on the monument erected by the Native Daughters in 1939 claims that $20,000,000 in gold dust was mined in the vicinity of Murphys. Estimates place the amount as high as $300,000,000. When one considers that several stores in Murphys, Douglas Flat, and Vallecito were buying gold, as well as Wells, Fargo and Company, and also its predecessor Brown's Express, we can see what an impossible task it is to estimate the gold production of the region. Also, many hundreds of miners carried their gold out to Stockton and San Francisco where it was traded in for supplies. Any estimate is little more than a wild guess.

Several reliable historical sources claim that the gravel in Murphys was the richest in the county.[38] The reason for this was due to the fact that the Tertiary (or prehistoric) Calaveras River was directly under Murphys.

Geologists believe that at one time the ocean covered the Sierra Nevada Mountains, and all of the western part of the continent to the Rockies was under water. Due to the adjusting of the surface of the earth, a mountain range was forced up where the Sierra is now; but this range was not so high as the present range and the rivers of this period, called the Tertiary, did not run so directly down the mountains to the valley as they do now. Later on, another adjustment in the earth's surface forced the Sierra higher, and, in some cases, volcanic eruption filled the old river beds, and new river beds were formed. In these old river beds large quantities of

gold had been washed free. The new rivers in many cases cut across these old rivers and the miners found the gold in the sand of the present rivers.

The south fork of the Tertiary Calaveras had its origin in Tuolumne County at the Dardanelles. It flowed north and west into Calaveras County, crossing the Stanislaus River just east of Douglas Flat and 1,000 feet above its present bed. At Douglas Flat the Murphy's branch of the river joined the main river which turned south to Vallecito. The Central Hill Mine south of Murphys, the Ohio and Texas Gravel Mines in Douglas Flat, tapped the gravel in this old river bed. Near Vallecito, and to the north it was tapped by the Wild Goose and the Manitou Mines. At Vallecito the river channel turns west and north to Altaville, and was tapped by the Golden River, Vallecito Western, and Slab Ranch Mines. The old river channel continues north to Dogtown and passes directly under the city of San Andreas, where it was tapped by a number of mines that were extremely rich in the early period of mining. It is called the Central Hill branch of the Tertiary Calaveras there, and continues on to the northwest where it joins the Mokelumne Hill branch near Valley Springs.[39]

It was at Douglas Flat that the miners first tapped these old river beds under Table Mountain.

The Central Hill Mine was first worked in the fifties by ten men from the state of Maine.[40] At a later period, in the 1890's, it was operated by Bisbee, Thomas, and McCormick. It was first mined by shafts being driven down to the gravel of the ancient river bed and then by tunneling along the gravel. Later on, a small reservoir was built on the hill above the mine and hydraulic methods were used to wash out the gravel. In order to carry off the tailings, a tunnel was run from the mine to Douglas Flat, a distance of 2,400 feet. Any gold that escaped the sluices was caught in the tunnel behind blocks as in a sluice box. The Central Hill produced a great deal of gold (there are no records as to how much) before it was closed down about 1898. Tony Malaspina, who worked there as a boy, remembers the clean-up for one two weeks' period being $24,000.

The Ohio Mine on the same channel had a somewhat similar history as it was first mined by tunnels and later by hydraulic methods. It was a very rich producer for many years, but later on

failed and the owner, Uptograph, turned it over to his workmen for what he owed them. They finally closed it in 1892.

The Texas Gravel Mine in Douglas, on the same channel, was operated by John Manuel for a number of years before he went into the lumber business. It was also a rich producer.

The mining in Murphys Flat was in three general regions: Owlsburg, north of town; Algiers, on Murphys Gulch south of town; and in the lower end of the flat just below the town.

There are a great many references to the rich mining in Owlsburg. For example, the *San Andreas Independent,* April 17, 1858, says:

> "The Stuby and Gruin and Company are yielding a very fair average. That owned by C. Murphy and Company is generally believed to be exceedingly rich."

On July 31, 1858, the *Independent* states:

> "Messrs. Austin A. Kaler and Robert Brown have struck a good claim in Owlsburg, in the vicinity of Murphys, where they will be able to make big pay when sufficient water comes to enable them to work it properly."

The same paper for April 20, 1859, states:

> "The miners of Owlsburg near Murphys are driving a fine business. Murphys and Co. are making excellent wages and Peter King and Co. are doing remarkably well."

This area was worked very thoroughly by the Chinese in the 'seventies after the American miners had abandoned their claims there as worked out.[41]

The area just below town paid in large quantities of gold. There is one four-acre area just behind the Murphys Hotel, where it is claimed $5,000,000 in gold was taken out. Down the creek about two hundred yards, along the Deep Cut, is another area called "the million dollar hole." It is claimed by Judge Shepherd, who was born in Murphys in 1852, and lived there all his life, that a million dollars in gold was taken out of this small area. This region was mined down to bedrock, and in most of the region the limestone bedrock is visible. Just north of this area and across the Altaville road is a mined-out area called the "pump hole." This was mined out in the 'fifties and the returns were very rich. However, in the later period of mining, John and Fred Hauselt built a big wooden water wheel to pump the water out of

the hole and then mine the area. They found, though, that the old miners of the 'fifties had pretty thoroughly cleaned out the gold. It is now the local swimming hole for the kids of Murphys in the summer.[42]

The region to the south of town, leading up Murphy's Gulch, was known as Algiers because of the many Frenchmen who were settled in this area.[43] There is no record of the amount of gold taken out of this area, but the piles of rock and gravel, and in places bare limestone, indicate it was intensely worked.

Murphys was also a trading center for a number of mining areas surrounding it. Probably the most important was Missouri Gulch, paralleling the Kenney Ranch road, and Pennsylvania Gulch, crossing it near the Kenney Ranch house. Where these two gulches meet, the little village of Brownsville grew up in the 1860's.[44] The *San Andreas Independent,* April 17, 1858, states:

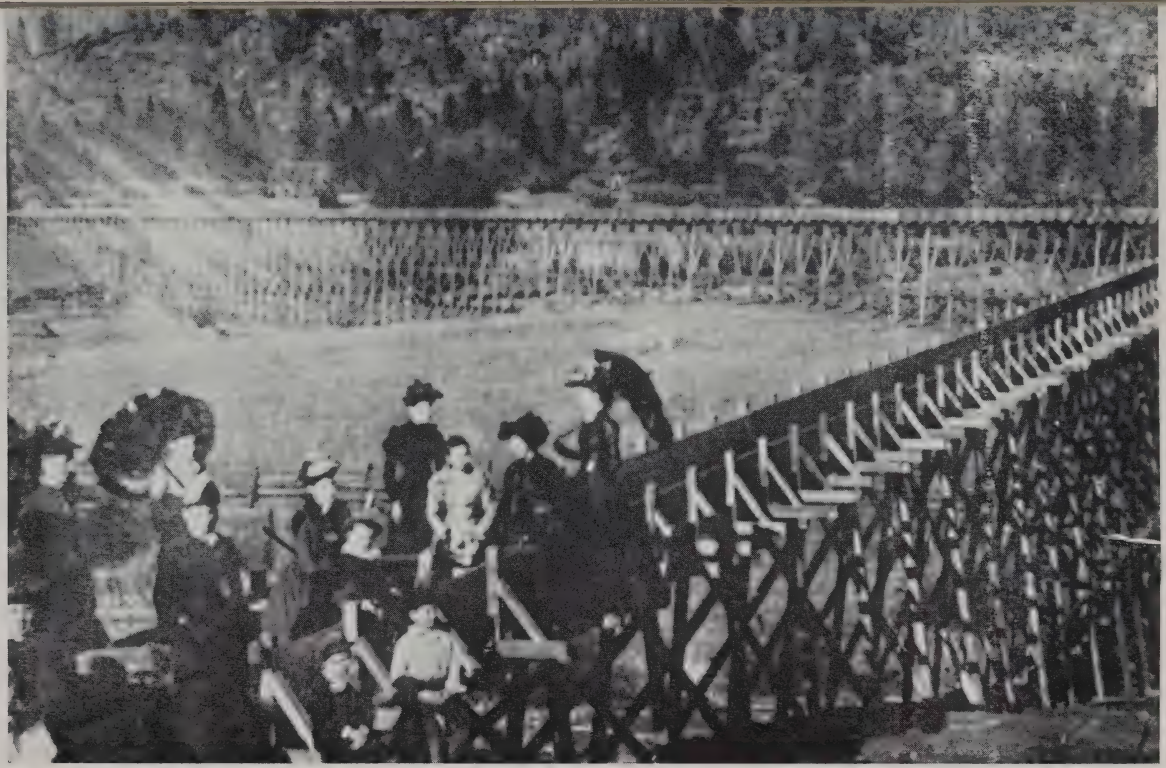
> "In Pennsylvania and Missouri Gulches (near Murphys) the claim of L. Proper and Co., W. Davis, Peoples and Co., V. A. Shearer, Mooney and Co., are yielding an abundant harvest."

French Gulch, two miles west of Murphys, was a rich and busy little mining town in the 'fifties, with Murphys as its nearest trading and amusement center. The *Independent,* August 18, 1860, states:

> "There are still a few mining companies at work on the old placers of French Gulch. Colburn, Randall, and Myers are working old tailings over in the bed of the gulch below the sawmill of Mr. Thompson. They realize six dollars per day to the man. Their claim will last through several seasons.
>
> "Judge Carley and Co. are at work and doing well on the same gulch. There are two stores in the little village, one kept by Mr. Montgaillard, the other by Mr. Laroux."

Other areas around Murphys which were important mining areas and which used Murphys as a trading center were: Skunk's Misery on the east, near the Stanislaus; Douglas Flat, Six Mile Creek, Coyote Creek and Red Hill on the south; and San Domingo and Indian Creeks to the north. Miners from all these areas came to Murphys for recreation and provisions.

There have been a large number of quartz mines worked in the area around Murphys, in the East Belt of the Mother Lode, but most of them have been small "pocket" mines. The Oro Plata was



The flume for the south ditch which carried water to the Ohio Mine in Douglas and crossed the Vallecito road south of town.

an exception, and was a rich producer for a long period of years. The Oro Y Plata, as it should be called, goes back to the 'fifties when the first claim was called the Blue Wing. This claim was at the head of Owlsburg Gulch one-half mile north of Murphys. The first rock from this mine was worked in *arrastras,*[45] but in 1861 Woodworth and Company, composed of eight men, erected a quartz mill on this claim which was the finest in the county. The building was three stories high and equipped with a sixty-five horsepower engine which could crush forty-eight tons of quartz every twenty-four hours. According to a clipping in the Bancroft Library *Scrapbook,* eighty tons of ore had been tested and promised to pay $800 a ton. There were 300 tons of this ore piled up ready to be milled. The ledge from which this ore was taken was only thirty feet from the mill.

It was from this mill in 1862 that E. Palache, agent of Wells Fargo and Co., shipped the first gold bar ever sent from Murphys. It weighed fifty-two ounces.

The Woodworth Company apparently quit, because in 1876 Page Cutting located the Blue Wing claim and changed its name to the Red Wing. He sold this claim to the Oro Plata Mining and Milling Company in 1881, whose affairs were largely directed by Z. Willard. In 1878 this company had acquired several claims adjoining the Red Wing—The Payrocks and the Oro Plata, and had built a chlorination mill in the canyon above the Tanner Ranch. This was one of the first chlorination plants ever operated. Two mills were operated by this company having a combined capacity of approximately 75 tons daily. In 1885 this company became the Willard Mining Company.

The Oro Plata mine operated on a fairly large scale with twenty-five or more employees, but there is no record of total production. The mine was closed from 1888 to 1927, the machinery was moved away, and the mill building had burned. In 1926 the Union Consolidated Mining Co. acquired the claim for $25,000. This company had been organized in Virginia City, Nevada, in 1863 and reopened the mine and built a modern flotation mill on the property which would treat fifty tons of rock a day. They employed on an average of from twenty-eight to thirty-five men in the mine and mill. Approximately $350,000 worth of gold, silver and copper has been produced by this company. The mine was closed down in 1942.[46]

The other mines around Murphys are small and space will allow us to only mention them. The Mexican Mine west of town has been a fairly good producer. It was originally discovered by Mexicans, and it is claimed they took out $75,000. Ed Black acquired the mine and took out $22,000. Tony Malaspina found a pocket from which he took out fifty-six pounds of almost pure gold when working the mine for Ed Black. The mine is now called the Crown Point and owned by M. H. Manuel.

Other mines nearby are the Tanner, Mayday, Mayflower, Cunliff and Driver, Beatrice, Bumble-Bee, Taylor, Collier, Rocky Bar, Buckhorn, Red Gold, Norfolk, Cornet, Treasure and Piety Hill group.

On the road to Sheep Ranch, on Indian Creek, is the Calaveras Mine which was also operated by Mr. Willard, of the Oro Plata. It is claimed that this mine has produced a million and a half in gold. Nearby is the Right Bower from which a man named Woods is supposed to have taken out $400,000.[47]

Besides these gold mines, James Sperry had an iron mine one mile east of Murphys which he was working in the 'eighties. It had a lode forty feet in width and assays showed from sixty to seventy per cent iron. The *Calaveras Citizen,* January 5, 1884, predicted this mine would some day become famous, but apparently this was not achieved.

FIRE!

Many people who visit the old mining towns of the Mother Lode ask why there are not more empty buildings if these sleepy little villages were once such thickly populated, busy towns. The chief reason for this is that practically all the towns were destroyed by fire on at least one occasion if not several times. The first residences were tents and brush arbors, and then log cabins. Very soon the sawmills began to come in, as timber was plentiful and prices high, and they furnished the lumber for the building of wooden structures. Until the towns had been visited by a bad fire at least once, the camps made no effort to obtain fire-fighting equipment, and when a fire started among the wooden buildings, it was impossible to check it until all the buildings had been consumed. Many times the buildings were immediately rebuilt of stone with iron shutters, but if the mining in the camp was being depleted, no effort was made to rebuild the town. These old stone buildings still remain, but no evidence is left of the many wooden buildings which were destroyed.

Murphys was visited by many bad fires, but the business sections of the town were practically destroyed three times—in 1859, 1874, 1893. The first fire visited Murphys on Sunday afternoon, August 20, 1859, just eight days after the neighboring town of Vallecito had been destroyed. Here is the report of the fire as reported to the *San Andreas Independent,* August 27, 1859:

MURPHYS DESTROYED BY FIRE

The fire commenced in the Magnolia Saloon, situated near the west end of town, and surrounded by wooden buildings that would ignite and burn as readily as so many hay stacks. The Magnolia was used as a Fandango House and was tenanted by some disruptable Mexican women at the time, one of whom is suspected, acted the incendiary, in revenge for some harsh treatment she had received.

It was first observed by a gentleman who was standing directly opposite Mr. Crispin's store, and was burning in the upper part of the building, apparently within a very small space. This was about 2 o'clock p. m. Before effective efforts were made to extinguish it, the flames burst out of the windows, roof and doors,

communicating with wooden tenements on either side, and crossing the street. The wind was stirring pretty briskly, from the west, which carried the fire rapidly down through the business part of the town along both sides of Main Street, leaving not a single house, eastward, from the starting point of the fire, on the south side of the street and but one on the north side, viz Mr. Traver's large fireproof store. The excellent and justly popular hotel of Sperry and Perry which was thought to be fire-proof was destroyed with the rest, and everything within its walls in the line of personal effects, belonging to the proprietors, boarders and travelers who were temporarily stopping there. One gentleman, Mr. Davis, from Sonora, who with his wife had just arrived, lost $1,000 in traveling wardrobe and jewelry. The loss of the proprietors and the destruction of the fine hotel are public calamities. They kept one of the best houses in the interior of the State and were gentlemen of praiseworthy public spirit, using the advantage of their position to the benefit of the town and its interests.

Their loss is estimated at $25,000, which figures, if any are but little exaggerated. Traver's store contained an immense stock of goods. It was surrounded by a large frame and the fire raged with fearful violence about it, but the thick wall and stout iron windows and door shutters were proof against the fiery element. Not a particle of damage was inflicted upon any goods within the building, though Mr. Traver lost considerable property by the burning of wooden outhouses, in which were stored some articles of merchandise. The entire business part of town with the exception of Traver's store, Renaud & Mets's bakery and a building opposite the latter, occupied as a retail liquor establishment, was swept away in less than forty minutes. In fifteen minutes from the discovery of the fire, over thirty houses were in flames. So rapid was the communication that no time was allowed to save personable movables, hence the loss in clothing, bedding and household furniture are fully equal to the buildings destroyed. Below we append a list of sufferers with the amount lost by each. It will be seen that the total foots up about $100,000. We are informed that merchants and others who deposited choice articles of property a safe distance from the fire, lost a number of valuables, which are supposed to have been spirited away by the thieving diggers. Mr.

Matteson, whose livery stable was burned, but who saved all his horses, and most of his equipage, lost a number of fine saddles by this "spiriting process."

Sperry and Perry contemplate rebuilding the hotel at once. A gentleman who left Murphys on Monday evening stated that some fifteen or twenty houses were then started in the burnt district. Dr. Jones lost his case of surgical instruments valued at $500. They were placed in an iron safe, and upon opening it after the fire, though the papers therein were all sound and right, the instruments were untempered and ruined.

The affliction is severe and general, but it is borne with a fortitude and nonchalance nowhere so admirably exhibited as among Californian Pioneers overtaken by adversity. Here is the list of losses:

Dr. Jones, $500; McNeal & Clemmons, $1,500; James Kerns, $800; John Henriette, $1,800; Louis Robinson, $800; R. Davis & Co., $3,500; C. Rausana, $1,500; B. Myers, $900; Louis Schearer, $300; Gel Michelor, $1,800; Johnson & Weber, $1,500; B. F. Marshall, $1,000; George Taylor, $400; K. O'Brien, $400; T. Doyle, $1,500; A. Gagely, $500; Wm. Griffith, $1,000; Kleny & Bruner, $1,000; Gel Reinhardt, $2,500; A. H. Putney, $4,000; Dedrick, $2,000; A. H. Steven, $700; J. Hensdorff, $500; O. B. Powers, $200; Wm. Grispin, $3,000; Worden & Harker, $7,000; Matteson & Bates, $4,000; P. L. Traver, $4,500; Sperry & Perry, $25,000; R. Senter, $1,000; Hughes & Hunt, $500; S. A. Bates, $500; G. Rooney, $300; A. Solomon, $800; Warren Stone, $1,500; Jos. Haris, $700; Birmingham & Brother, $1,500; M. Johnson, $500; Marquita Marcasa, $500; Cornelius Smith, $1,000; Sam'l. Parsons, $1,000; Joseph Carley, $500; Conrad Housteldt, $500; Dr. Martin, $700; James Ayres, $150; Francisco Valsallo, $5,000; H. Lang, $2,700.

This list of losses gives a good idea of the size of the business district in Murphys. Business was good, and Murphys was rebuilt, this time with more stone buildings.[48] An article in the *Independent,* March 2, 1860, stated that Murphys had been practically rebuilt and that few town lots were vacant. Judge Putney had erected a neat little theater, large enough to hold any audience likely to gather in the community.[49] Sperry and Perry had rebuilt, enlarged, and improved their hostelry so that it was one of the finest hotels in the mountains.[50] Dr. Jones was building an extensive stone building

across the street east from Matteson & Bates' Livery Stable and across the street north from the Sperry's Hotel for his Apothecary Shop.[51] The Union Water Company had completed their stone building with a brick front for use as an office building. Murphys had rebuilt, this time more permanently.

Murphys was again visited by a disastrous fire in June, 1874, in which practically all of the business section of the town was destroyed. By this time the placer mining was exhausted and there was little interest in rebuilding. The *Calaveras Chronicle*, June 6. 1874, carries this item:

> "The town of Murphys in this county was visited by a disastrous conflagration Friday of last week. The fire originated in Doyle's fruit store and destroyed every wooden building on that (south) side of the street from Sperry & Perry's Hotel to Rowland's Store. On the north side everything was burned between Senter and Compere's stores, about thirty buildings being consumed in all.
>
> "The fire was stopped by the fire-proof buildings at each end of town. Quite a number of families lost all they had by the fire. The loss is estimated at $30,000. No insurance. We learn that the probabilities are that but few of the buildings will be rebuilt."

A visitor to Murphys at this time describes the fire as he saw it on his return from the Big Trees:

> "As we neared the village of Murphys we observed dense clouds of smoke rising towards the heavens from a point not far from where that place was supposed to be. . . . We soon discovered that the whole village was on fire, and as we had left our baggage at the Hotel, anxiety soon took the place of curiosity. Our hotel, with about half-a-dozen other houses alone were saved. Thus many of the mining villages of California pass away.
>
> "That night it seemed as though half of the wild Indians of California and the wilder white men, had assembled to celebrate the destruction of the village in a drunken night carousal."[52]

There is no evidence that there was much haste to rebuild the town after this fire, and Murphys never again had the large business section it had during the 'fifties and 'sixties. Of course, there was some rebuilding, but business conditions no longer demanded a

complete restoration as they had in 1859. As the fire was on the west end of main street, west of Senter's store (Morley's Garage), the Matteson Livery Stable and the block directly north of the Sperry Hotel was not burned.

The third big fire in Murphys was the most spectacular in its beginning, but did not destroy as much property as the two previous ones. It started about five o'clock, one hot afternoon in late July, 1893, in a warehouse which was behind the Manuel-Garland Store, located at Main Street and the Sheepranch Road. Morley's Garage now occupies the store building. No one knows how the fire started, but soon after smoke was discovered coming from the building, five gallon cans of kerosene began to explode. People began to run to the fire, and then the cry went up to keep back—that black powder was stored in the warehouse. At this moment the powder exploded. Jack Morley, who was in the street by the Manuel-Garland Store at the time, says the whole building was lifted up and then spread out like an umbrella.

The contents of the warehouse—clothes, general merchandise, groceries, hams and bacons—were spread out over the trees and houses in the main part of town. Papers from the building were found even as far out as the Kenney Ranch, a mile east of town. Mrs. May Matteson Senter, who lived just across the street, wrote that the trees on Church Street looked like Christmas trees decorated with stockings, shoes, ribbons, and other merchandise and that it seemed a strange thing that no one ever found any of the hams which were stored in the warehouse. The Matteson house (now the parsonage) escaped the fire, but one end of the house was blown in and filled with rocks.

The explosion scattered burning shingles and set fire to the surrounding buildings. All of the block east of the explosion burned out except the old Wells Fargo Office which was built of stone. Matteson's Livery Stable burned again as it had in the Big Fire of 'fifty-nine, but again all the horses and the equipment were saved. The Manuel-Garland Store which was the closest to the explosion did not burn and was not damaged. The building was constructed by P. L. Travers in 1856 out of stone with iron shutters on the windows, and it was as safe from fire as it was possible to make a building in those days. The fire in 1874 had burned everything up to this building before it was stopped. The almost miraculous thing about the disaster was that no one was injured.

A view of Murphys from the hill west of town. Notice the Deep Cut at the right.

CRIME AND MINER'S JUSTICE

The ruling passion among the miners of 1848 was honesty. It would seem from reports that the miners were even more honest than the usual frontiersman. When Governor Mason visited the mines in 1848 he was impressed by the good behavior of the men in the mining area. James Carson, who mined on Carson Creek in August, 1848, wrote:

> "Honesty was the ruling passion amongst the miners of '48. Old debts were paid; bags of gold dust were carelessly left lying in their homes; mining tools, though scarce, were left in their places of work for days at a time and not one theft or robbery was committed."[53]

He explains further that disputes were rare in 1848, and the miners had no division of the ground into claims. Many times four or five men would be working in a space a few feet in diameter. Later on, they would measure the claim off with a tape measure under the direction of the alcalde.

This condition could not last. As news of the discovery spread to all parts of the world, there was a stampede to the gold fields that included all classes of society. During the summers of 1849 and 1850, drunkards and puritans, clergymen and convicts, honest and dishonest, rich and poor crowded into the mines and worked shoulder to shoulder. People with all kinds of backgrounds—from all parts of the world—Europe, Asia, Africa—hurried to the diggings. The newspapers of 1849 reported vessels in San Francisco harbor flying flags from more than a score of foreign countries. Many of these foreigners were of the lowest class and were anxious to make a fortune in the quickest way possible. Crime became rampant.

Carson had an entirely different report to make of conditions in 1849. He writes:

> "This honesty was not to be found in the crowds that daily thickened around us in 'forty-nine. Hordes of pick-pockets, robbers, thieves, and swindlers were mixed with men who had come with honest intentions. . . . Murder, thefts and robberies soon became the order of the day."[54]

It was only natural that Murphys Diggings with its reputation of richness would attract a large number of these scoundrels. Ger-

stacher, who visited Murphys in April, 1850, has this to say:

"Never had so many murders been heard of before. A vile rabble of ragamuffins had determined to find gold at any price.

"The foremost of this class were the gamblers who galloped from diggings to diggings. Next, crowds of Mexicans, driven away from every place where mining was good were swarming in the mountains. Many by ill-treatment of brutal Yankees were goaded to despair and shed blood for gratification.

"One day two Mexicans were found close to Murphys Camp lying in the grass with skulls broken, clothes cut open—murderers had taken their gold bags."[55]

This condition was complicated by the lack of any governmental machinery to cope with the element. The discovery of gold and the rush to the mines came so soon after the acquisition of California that Congress, which was arguing over slavery, had not provided for any government other than that of the Military Governor. The only local government was that of the Mexican system where the alcalde was both judge and constable. This was not only inadequate but distasteful to the American miners. The Americans had been trained in self-government. Many of them had come from the frontier where they had learned to depend upon themselves; therefore, the miners were not long in organizing to defend themselves against the depredations of the unscrupulous. The miners' courts were not, when judged from a true knowledge of conditions, the action of mob rule, tending toward anarchy and lawlessness, but a means of protection—a method of social control.

Every mining camp or district had its alcalde and sheriff, chosen and backed by the miners. When there was a need for a jury, the miners were called together without much legal formality, and there was no appeal from the decision. As there were no jails or prisons in the early camps, the punishment was immediate and drastic. Banishment from camp, whippings, cutting off ears, and hangings were the usual forms of punishment. These seem harsh, but they were effective. The miners were tolerant and slow to action, but when some flagrant violation of their sense of justice occurred, action was rapid and severe. One of the first miner's trials in California was held at Murphys in the early part of 1849.

John Lynch, one of Colonel Stevenson's soldiers, describes this trial:

> "In the early days theft was almost unknown, and it was quite common for the miners to leave their forenoon's working of gold in front of their tents to dry while they went to their afternoon's work. One day about half an ounce of gold so exposed disappeared. The miners held a conference and suspicion pointing strongly toward a new-comer, he was taken into custody. A jury was called of which Richard Roman, afterwards State Treasurer, was foreman, and of which I was a member. The evidence against the fellow was slight, but the jury believed him guilty, and the sentence was banishment from camp. On being released, he was glad to leave quickly. I believe this was the first trial by jury in the mines."[56]

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The miners of Murphys were not only able to solve the engineering problems involved in their mining, but they were able to meet the social problems of crime. Several of the camps in the southern mines formed Vigilante Committees in the early 'fifties, and Murphys was no exception. It was called the Law and Order League and was organized by a group of husky young New Englanders who became the Sheriff's posse and helped subdue the toughs and criminals.[57]

When the guilty were caught, the miners of Murphys could and did punish quickly and severely. On February 10, 1852, two men arrived in Murphys, one somewhat in advance of the other. During the evening they treated each other as strangers, but apparently had a good understanding of their plans. That night a cabin was broken into and $400 in quicksilver and gold was taken, a clothing store was also broken into and robbed of a diamond pin, a revolver, and twenty dollars. When the robbery was discovered in the morning, suspicion rested upon the two strangers. The constable watched the strangers, and when they left about the middle of the morning, one going to the west and the other to the east, he followed the older of the two and soon came upon the two of them. Forcing them to accompany him back to town, he called to some miners to help him and guard them until they could be tried. The bundle of loot had been dropped by one of the robbers, as he thought, unnoticed, but the constable recovered it and brought it in as evidence. The pair were tried the next morn-

ing before Dr. Vanderslice and a jury of miners, and as the bundle of loot was positive proof, they were found guilty and sentenced to be hanged at five o'clock that afternoon. The older of the two was about twenty-seven years of age, hard featured, and looked capable of any villainy. The other was about twenty-three, of pleasing countenance and obviously less hardened to crime. They refused to give their names or confess,[58] but the younger one wrote a letter to a friend which never reached its destination and is preserved in the museum at San Andreas. It reads as follows:

Murphys Mines, Feb. 11, 1852.

Dear Friend:

I take the opportunity of writing the few lines to you hoping to find you in good health me and Charley is sentence to be hung to day at 5 o clock for a robbery good by give my best respect to Frank and Sam and Church

John Bucroft

They were hanged on an oak tree on the hill back of where the school house now stands.

Another cause for the great amount of lawlessness in the mines was the racial friction and hatred, accentuated by the greed for gold. The American miner was especially intolerant of all other nationalities, as he considered the land his by right of recent conquest and the foreigner as an invader of his right. This resentment was directed towards all other racial groups, more or less, but was especially bitter toward the Mexicans and Chileans and to a lesser degree towards the French. There were few American miners who were willing to allow Mexicans to hold claims of their own even though they may have been acquired in 1848. They were driven out of their claims by force, and this brutal treatment turned many of the Mexicans to a life of banditry, either as a means of making a living or simply as a means of revenge on the gringo.

The first state legislature increased this feeling of resentment by passing the Foreign Miner's Tax Law in April, 1850, which provided that anyone not a citizen of the United States would have to pay a tax of twenty dollars a month for the privilege of mining. This created great indignation among the miners of Murphys, a large number of whom were French with a smaller number of German, and a few Spaniards, since a large majority could not pay the tax. Only a few had obtained claims that paid in large amounts. Many were lucky to make even fair wages; and often

Yellowjacket, the blind Indian preacher who lived in the rancheria north of Murphys.

days and weeks were spent searching for good claims and developing them, the miners having no income during that time.

Some of the foreigners declared they would not pay the tax and armed themselves to defend what they considered were their rights. Even the American miners considered the tax too high.

On May 20, 1850, a rumor spread through the camp at Murphys that revolution had broken out in Sonora. It was reported that the sheriff had been stabbed in a fight with the foreigners and some Frenchmen and Germans had been put in jail. At about the same time a letter addressed to the French of Murphys, arrived from Sonora calling upon them to come to the aid of their countrymen. Amid great excitement they armed themselves and in military formation marched defiantly off to war. The affair proved to be a hoax. When the French reached the vicinity of Sonora they found that there had been no trouble. The letter was genuine, but the writer must have been drunk.

About 3,000 Mexican, Chilean, and French miners had gathered near Sonora and passed resolutions memoralizing the governor to reduce the tax to only four or five dollars a month, pointing out that the sum of twenty dollars was prohibitive. The American miners, thinking this crowd was gathering to attack them, assembled, some from as far away as Murphys. By noon of the 20th, one thousand armed American miners were in Sonora. In the excitement rumors were easily spread. Stories of open hostilities in the surrounding camps were rife. Two days later the sheriff and collector of tax, backed by an armed posse of 500 Americans, marched out to Shaw's diggings. No opposition was encountered, but one Frenchman was arrested for inciting to riot. The posse next marched to American Camp where it was rumored the French flag was flying. Upon arrival there was no sign of the flag and all was peaceful.[59] This was the extent of the excitement. The foreigners dispersed and the Frenchmen from Murphys returned to camp, singly and at night, somewhat ashamed of themselves for their belligerency. In a statement to the alcade they apologized for their hasty action, but the American miners were not willing to accept the apology and in a public meeting censured the action of the French.[60] The incident only added further bitterness to racial prejudice. This event was known as the French Revolution.

The Foreign Miners' Tax was used in a number of instances as a means of robbing Chinese and Mexicans by unscrupulous

Americans who, pretending to be tax collectors, robbed the foreigner of all his gold. The Chinese were especially victimized because they did not understand the language and were not likely to put up a fight. The Mexicans and Chileans were similarly treated. These were driven from any mining claim that showed much "color" and if they attempted to defend their claims, they were subjected to brutal assaults or murdered. It is no wonder that these foreigners fought back in any way possible, and, outnumbered by the Americans, took every advantage to rob and murder the gringo, especially at night and in lonely places.

One of the most notorious bandits of the period was Joaquin Murieta, who, according to report, began his career of crime in Murphys in 1850. It is difficult to appraise Murieta's place as an historical character because of the many legendary stories about him. As early as May, 1853, the legislature passing an act authorizing Captain Harry S. Love to raise a company of mounted rangers to capture the bandit, specified that there were five Joaquins—Murieta, Ocomorenia, Valenzuela, Botellier, and Carrillo.[61] Even at that time it was not known for certain who the bandit was, and it is even more difficult today to separate fact from fiction, but any effort to write a history of Murphys must include a discussion of Murieta. Too many stories about him are believed by the old-timers to regard him as a fictitious character. Some of these stories are contradictory.

For example, Louis Prusshay, a Frenchman who came to Murphys in 1850 and lived here all the rest of his life, claimed that he knew Murieta well and had a partnership in a mining claim with him on San Domingo Creek. He described Murieta as being handsome, a fancy dresser, but rather short and quick of action.[62]

Joe Enos, known to everyone as "Portugese" Joe, came to Murphys in 1852. He claimed he knew Murieta well, and described him as being a handsome Spaniard, light skinned, and a fancy dresser, but a big man of about six foot three inches.[63] It is hard to reconcile such contradictory stories.

Ben Marshall, constable of Murphys in 1850, had an old daguerreotype of Murieta which had been given to him by the Mexican in 1850 before he started on his career of crime. The constable had befriended Murieta, and the story, as told by Frank Marshall, son of Ben Marshall, is that in 1850 Joaquin was dealing Monte in a sky blue tent, known as the "Blue Tent," on the west end of Murphys. One day a group of rowdy American miners

decided to upset the Mexican's tent and drive him out of camp, but Marshall, hearing the noise, stopped the affair. The Americans became very angry at the constable because he was defending the Mexican against the Americans, but Marshall told them Murieta had a right to run his business unmolested, and if they didn't go on their way and behave themselves, he would arrest them. It was not long after this that Joaquin went to Sonora where he had his picture taken and on returning to Murphys gave the daguerrotype to Marshall because he had treated him fairly. Unfortunately this picture cannot be located today by the grandchildren of Ben Marshall.

Marshall became the second sheriff of Calaveras County in 1851 when he was appointed to fill out the term of Sheriff John Hanlon, who had died. One night in Mokelumne Hill, then the county seat, Marshall saw a figure in the dark and recognizing it as Murieta, called to him to stop. The Mexican did not answer. Marshall called again, giving his own name. The Mexican then stopped, drew his gun and advanced cautiously toward the sheriff who told him to put his gun away. Murieta refused, saying that while Marshall had once befriended him there might be others around who would recognize him. Marshall then told him that he didn't blame him for feeling as he did toward all Americans after the way he had been treated, but that for the crimes he had committed the people were demanding his arrest, and as sheriff he would have to fulfill his oath of office unless Murieta left the county and never returned. Joaquin replied, "I respect you, Sir. You have my word, I'll leave tonight." He backed away and was gone in the darkness. No more crimes traceable to Murieta himself were committed in Calaveras County. It was claimed, however, that he visited his sister, who lived in Murphys, several times after this, always at night.[64]

Stories such as these by the old-timers give much weight to the claim that Murphys was the place where Joaquin started on his career of revenge. It is related that Murieta was mining on the Stanislaus River when a group of tough American miners ordered him to leave his claim. When he refused to comply, they gave him a brutal beating and assaulted his wife. Regaining consciousness, he found his wife dead and buried her nearby. He then came to Murphys where he operated a Monte game in the "Blue Tent." About this time his brother was hanged unjustly by a mob at

Placerville. One day Murieta visited a friend out on Los Muertos Creek near Angels and borrowed a horse from him to ride back to Murphys. When he arrived, an American miner saw the horse and claimed that the Mexican had stolen it from him. A crowd of miners gathered around and were going to hang the Mexican until he convinced them that he had borrowed the horse from his friend and could prove it. This, however, only turned the wrath of the group against the friend, who was brought into camp and hanged.[65] Murieta was tied up and cruelly whipped. While being whipped, it is stated that Murieta turned around so that he could see the face of each one of his tormentors and burn it into his memory. He resolved to get revenge upon them. Not long after this he met one of these men at night on a trail near Murphys and, in a frenzy of hate, stabbed him to death. Eventually he killed all the men who had flogged him and hanged his friend.

Three-fingered Jack Garcia was the leader of a gang of horse-thieves and bandits with headquarters at Los Muertos. After Joaquin was driven from Murphys, he joined this band and later became its leader.[66] Murieta was cool and fearless, but one must wonder how he was able to control such a cruel and depraved character as Three-fingered Jack is reported to have been. Jack was especially fond of killing Chinamen; it was so easy, and he enjoyed the smell of fresh blood. One night at Murphys, Garcia robbed six Chinamen, and then tied them up by their queues and cold-bloodedly cut their throats.[67] He was supposed to have collected a string of Chinese ears from his murdered victims.

In a short time after Murieta became El Capitan, the bandits numbered over one hundred well-mounted men. This was a formidable group to fight even if caught. For over two years this gang, together with other gangs of Mexicans, terrorized the people of Calaveras County and the Southern Mines. Finally, in May, 1853, the state legislature came to the assistance of the local authorities and passed an act, previously referred to, which directed Captain Harry Love to organize a group of rangers to hunt down the bandits and destroy them. On Sunday, July 25, 1853, these Rangers came upon a band of Mexicans in the mountains west of Tulare Lake at Arroyo Contina. In the fight that followed the gang was wiped out, and it was claimed both Murieta and Three-fingered Jack were killed.[68] Murieta's head and Jack's maimed hand were pickled in alcohol and exhibited in many places in the state, including Murphys

where an admission fee of one dollar was charged.[69] It was then that Ben Marshall saw the head and was certain it was not that of Murieta. Whether it was or not, crime and murder in the region decreased. Legend has it that Murieta returned to his native land, Sonora, Mexico, and lived for many years afterward.

Although Murphys was probably the location from which the famous bandit started his career, the community was more successful than many places in the county in ridding itself of the criminal class. Mention has already been made of the Law and Order League. A writer in the *San Joaquin Republican,* November 13, 1852, states:

> "The community here (Murphys) and in the vicinity is a "white one," and is no doubt the best in the mineral regions. Murphys was once called a "hard old place," but the only thing hard about it now is the hard usage that the thief or mean man meets with on coming here. It is no place for such people; the society being too good for them."

Matteson's stage line received much attention from the highwaymen, as it carried the mail and the Wells Fargo strongbox. On a number of occasions, Colonel Lovelace, for many years a driver for Matteson, heard the command from behind a rock or clump of bushes, "Throw down the box!" Since this challenge was usually supported by the business end of a double-barreled shot gun, the Colonel tossed the box off without delay. On the morning of May 27, 1880, Colonel Lovelace was driving the stage from Murphys to Milton when he heard the command. He complied without hesitation and proceeded to Angels where Constable J. B. Meyers was notified. The constable soon located the robber, a man named Thompson, who confessed. It was a Matteson stage that Black Bart, The "P O 8," held up at Funk Hill in November, 1883, on the Milton-Yosemite run that led to his capture.

Funk Hill, just east of Copperopolis, was a favorite spot for hold-ups, although the entire thirty-five mile stretch of stage road between Milton and Sonora was also a popular hangout for highwaymen. Between May, 1876, and March, 1885, twenty-one men had been sentenced to the state prison for stage robbery on that road.[70]

Murphys had its share of bad men. One of the later ones was "Wild Bill" Holt, still remembered by many of the old-timers. Bill mined over on the Stanislaus River and came to Murphys for his

excitement. Mrs. May Matteson Senter, daughter of T. J. Matteson, wrote:

> "I think the one (desperado) who brought the greatest terror to our hearts (when I was young) was Bill Holt. He always came to town on celebration days. He would come down the street with a shotgun over his shoulder, and in his belt, knives, dagger and pistol. After a few drinks he was ready to pick a fight with anyone. He came one time too many. After a day of threats, flourishing and firing his pistol, he shot an Indian but only wounded him. Late that night he stood in the hotel door. Somebody in the dark fired five shots at him. As he fell he said, 'You've got me, but I sent five ahead of me.' The murderer gave himself up, and there was a semblance of a trial, but he was exonerated."

The man who shot Holt was another bad man, Bill Finell. They both mined on the Stanislaus and had a disagreement over a mine. Holt vowed he would get even with Finell. When Finell saw Holt standing in the doorway of the Mitchler Hotel (Sperry's) one night, he got behind a tree and called out, "You thought you'd get me, but I'll show you." Holt drew his gun, but fell with five bullets in him before he could fire.[71] At the inquest it was brought out that the two men had disagreed, and no great effort was made to prosecute Finell.

Murphys has a small jail that is very picturesque. It is to be doubted that any really bad man was ever housed in it. It is said that one of the men who built it, became drunk and rowdy while celebrating its completion and was the first inmate. However, the exciting days of badmen and gold have passed for Murphys and there is no longer need for even this little "calaboose." The iron doors remain open and the kids now play games in it.

Oxen used in logging operations near Murphys.

LUMBER

When the miners first came into Murphys Flat, they found the valley and surrounding hills covered with pine forests. A writer for the *San Joaquin Republican,* November 13, 1852, stated that the amount of pine forests in the vicinity of Murphys was inexhaustible. There is no record of who brought in the first sawmill, but it is claimed the first sawmill in Calaveras County was built at Mountain Ranch. There must have been one in the vicinity of Murphys by 1850, as there were wooden houses. There were two steam sawmills at Murphys in November, 1852.[72] One was owned by Brown, Gilman, and Knap, and was located on Mill Street with yards at Vallecito, Douglas Flat, and Albany Flat.

In the 'fifties there were three mills on the Big Trees Road or adjacent to it. Hanford and Company had a sawmill on Mill Creek, where the Utica Ditch now crosses it. This mill had lumber yards at Murphys and Angels and was afterwards sold to Kimball and Cutting of Murphys. The Union Water Company had a mill, also on Mill Creek, located one and one-half miles above the Hanford Mill, in the early 'fifties. Sleeper and Company had a water-power mill on a branch of San Antone Creek, about thirteen miles north of Murphys and operated lumber yards at Murphys and Altaville. This mill was sold to Freeman Dunbar in the 'fifties who operated a large lumber yard in the lot now owned by Dr. Cole, south of the Native Daughters' Monument. The combined output of these sawmills were 250,000 board feet per month.

Kimball and Cutting operated the sawmill bought from Hanford and company, until 1880. They had a large lumber yard in Murphys short distance up the Big Trees road, where they had two large sheds, one 168 and the other 100 feet long, wherein could be stored 400,000 feet of lumber. Kimball died in 1878 and the partnership was broken up.[73] The lumber business was sold to John Manuel.

Hold on, stranger! Turn out close to the wall!
For the road's rather narrow, and I've got it all!
Said the lumberman of Calaveras.
Take the road that I came, and beware of short cuts!
You will not lose the way if you follow the ruts.
I am sorry to force you, my friend, to turn out;

But this is the regular lumberman's route!
Said the Lumberman of Calaveras.

This quotation taken from the poem, "The Orthod-ox Team," by Fred E. Brooks, accurately described the situation when the traveler on the mountain roads of Calaveras County met one of the heavily laden lumber teams of the Manuel Company. Sixteen to twenty-four mules were hitched to three wagons piled high with lumber. For twenty-five years John Manuel was the lumberman of Calaveras and after his death in 1899, his business was incorporated by his heirs into the Manuel Estate Company, with Matt H. Manuel as general manager in charge of sales.

John Manuel, who came to California in 1855, had operated the Wild Goose and the Texas Gravel mines in Douglas Flat before going into the lumber business. He first operated one mill with a lumber yard at Murphys, but by 1904 the demand for lumber was so great that the Manuel Estate had two mills and lumber yards at Murphys and Angels. The first yard was on the lot across the street from Cademartori's Store and west of the present Matt Manuel home. Two long sheds housed the lumber. After the Sierra Railway was built into Angels from Jamestown this yard was abandoned. The mill has been moved several times. The mill and yard were taken over and are operated by the Angels Box and Lumber Company, a corporation organized by John Manuel, Jr., and entirely separate from the Manuel Estate.

The Manuels were the first to replace the twenty-four mule teams with a big steam traction engine pulling wagons with a capacity of 40,000 feet of lumber each trip. Many of the old-time residents of Murphys remember how this engine scared the horses and ruined the roads.[74]

For several years the Manuel mill was closed during which time the Raggio Brothers operated their mill. When the Raggio's had cut their timber on San Antone Creek, the Manuels again began sawing. Business was poor and this agreement was reached by the two interests to avoid disastrous competition.

The Raggio Brothers operated a sawmill a few miles north of Murphys near San Antone Creek for many years. Their lumber yard was located in Angels Camp. They also hauled a great deal of the timber for timbering the mines at Angels Camp.

John and Nathan McKay operated a sawmill about twelve miles from Murphys on the Big Trees road for many years, and had a

The big steam traction engine which Manuel's used for many years to pull the wagons loaded with lumber from the mill to the yard in Angels.

lumber yard in Angels Camp. A visitor to Murphys in 1892, stated that there were two mills in the vicinity of Murphys. One was owned by John Manuel and the other by the McKay Brothers. The two mills had a cutting capacity of 3,000,000 feet in a season.

The Jones Brothers hauled a great deal of timber for the mines of Angels through Murphys. The Morans, also, hauled timber for the mines. Much of the forests that once covered the hills and valleys near Murphys, is now buried in the mines beneath Angels Camp.

At present, the largest sawmill operating in the vicinity of Murphys is that of the Blagen Lumber Company, which was moved from Calpine, California, to the present location near the Big Trees in 1938 by Frank Blagen, who then incorporated it as the Blagen Lumber Company. The logs for this mill are supplied from a two and a half billion stand of sugar and ponderosa pine belonging to the Calaveras Land and Timber Company. In the summer of 1947 this mill set a new production record by cutting 4,473,020 board feet when operating one month on a five-day, two-shift basis. The mill was awarded the Army-Navy E in 1943 when it produced 45,000,000 board feet of lumber. The mill now operates as a subsidiary of the American Box Company of California and is managed by Lawrence Wilsey. It is considered to be one of the best operating plants in California.[75]

There have been other sawmills of small production in the Murphys region in recent years. The White Brothers operated a mill in Murphys during the 'thirties, after it burned the second time in 1938, it was not rebuilt. Fred Jones has operated a mill four miles up the Big Trees road for several years. French and Segale have operated a mill for the last three seasons a short distance from Avery. In 1947 there were fifty-seven sawmills of varying size and capacity in Calaveras County.

Twelve-mule teams used in hauling logs to timber the mines of Angels Camp. The driver is Joe Schochten.

BIG TREES

Although A. T. Dowd, a hunter for one of the Union Water Company camps at the time the aqueduct was being built, is given credit as the discoverer of the Calaveras Grove of the Big Trees *(Sequoia gigantea),* several men had seen them before. On May 20, 1850, two men, Whitehead and Thompson, discovered the grove while hunting. Twelve days afterward J. Marshall Wooster, William Quirk, and Sanburn visited the grove and carved their names on the burnt part of one of the trees.[76] However, none of these men announced their discovery and, therefore, Dowd justly deserves the credit, as he told the world about the trees.

It was in the spring of 1852 that Dowd came upon one of the Big Trees while following the trail of a grizzly bear. He was so awed by the size of the tree that all thoughts of the bear were forgotten. After convincing himself that he was not suffering from an optical illusion, he hurried back to camp and told his companions of the discovery. As hoaxing was a great sport in those early days, no one believed him. The following Sunday, when the men were resting in camp, Dowd went out early and presently came rushing back with the news that he had killed the biggest grizzly bear he had ever seen and needed help to bring it in. The boys, glad for the excitement, agreed to go with him. He led them to the foot of the tree that he had discovered and, pointing to its lofty top, exclaimed, "Boys, do you now believe my big tree story? That is the large grizzly I wanted you to see. Do you still think it a yarn?"[77]

It was not long until the world learned of these Big Trees, and Murphys, as the starting point to the grove, became world known.

When botanists learned of the discovery and had examined the cones and foliage, they believed a new genus had been found. Professor Lindley, an eminent English botanist, considered it a new genus and named it *"Wellingtonia Gigantia,"* but through the examination of Mr. Lobb, an American botanist, it was decided the trees belonged to the Toxodima family, and must be referred to the old genus *Sequoia sempervirens.* Consequently, the new species was called *Sequoia gigantea* instead of *Wellingtonia,* or *Washingtonia gigantea* as some patriotic Americans had wanted.[78]

Speculation began as to the age of these trees. Scientists were agreed that each concentric circle represented a year's growth, and, therefore, if one of the trees were felled, it would be possible to determine its age with fair accuracy. Five men from Murphys in 1853, decided to cut one of the large trees and determine its age.[79] It took twenty-two days to accomplish the task, which was done by boring through the trunk with pump augers to which additional pieces of metal had been welded to the handle. After the trunk had been severed, the uprightness of the tree and the breadth of its base sustained it in its position on its stump, and two and a half days of time were required to tip the tree over. This was done by inserting wedges in the auger holes and driving them in with the butts of trees. Finally after having braved the fires, winds, and storms of nearly three thousand years, it was forced to tremble and then fall. This giant was three hundred and two feet high, with a circumference of ninety-six feet at the ground.[80] The stump was smoothed off, the rings counted, and it was decided the tree was a thousand years old at the birth of Christ. The stump is twenty-five feet in diameter, five feet from the ground, and, before the bark was removed, it was twenty-eight feet in diameter. There is an interesting history connected with this stump. On July 4, 1861, a dance was held on the stump, which was large enough to hold the musicians and four sets dancing the cotillion. A house was built on the stump and served the varied purposes of housing a restaurant, a print shop (the Big Trees Bulletin was published from this stump in 1858, by J. Heckendom),[81] a dance hall, a church,[82] and a theater. At one time the trunk of the tree housed a ten pin alley and was wide enough for two alleys, side by side. The trunk scaled 165,000 board feet of lumber or enough to build sixteen five-room houses.[83]

As the Calaveras Grove of Big Trees was the first grove of *Sequoia gigantea* to be discovered, it was difficult to convince those who had not seen them of their size. In order to provide proof of the amazing grandeur and size, George Gale, in 1854, stripped the bark off one of the trees called "Mother of the Forest" to a height of 116 feet and shipped a portion of it to England for exhibition purposes. As a result of such exhibitions and the spread of information, famous people from all parts of the world came through Murphys on their way to the Big Trees. The register of the Sperry Hotel records the visits of such men as General Grant, Mark Twain,

The Stump House in the Calaveras Grove of the Big Trees.

Horatio Alger, Jr., I. Lipton, C. E. Bolton (Black Bart), John J. Astor, Jr., Henry Ward Beecher, George Hearst, and many others of lesser importance. These visitors were awed by the size of the *Sequoias*—ten of which are thirty feet or more in diameter, while more than seventy are between fifteen and thirty feet in diameter. The "Father of the Forest" was the largest, but has been fallen for many years. When standing it may have been over 400 feet high. There is a burned cavity in the center through which a man can walk for 200 feet. Most of the trees are named and at one time had marble name plates.

The wood of these trees is soft, of a beautiful reddish color and takes a high polish. While Sperry conducted the hotel at the grove, he kept a man employed making various articles out of the wood to be sold as souvenirs.

The land upon which the Grove is located was first privately claimed by Joseph Lapham of Sonora, who had a survey made in July, 1853, and called it the "Mammoth Grove Ranch." Wm. W. Lapham, who had an adjoining claim, purchased the claim of Joseph Lapham in the fall of 1853. The land was then acquired by A. S. Haynes, who built the first hotel to accommodate the tourists who made the trip by stage coach from Stockton. In December, 1858, Haynes sold all the property to James S. Sperry of Murphys.[84] In 1867 Sperry and Perry, who were partners in the Murphys Hotel, built a new and larger hotel, adequate for the comfortable accommodation of seventy-five guests. This hotel was destroyed by fire August 17, 1943.

Sperry and Perry gained government title to the property and increased the land holdings to 2,300 acres. Sperry eventually took over Perry's interest. In 1874 Sperry sold half the property to the Marques de Briges and Wm. Keefer for $25,000. However, disputes arose and Sperry filed suit in the Federal courts. The property was ordered sold at public auction in San Andreas in February, 1878. S. W. Sperry was the highest bidder with an offer of $14,500. On July 23, 1878, the property was again conveyed to James L. Sperry who operated the resort in his own name until 1890, when the title was conveyed to the Big Trees Company, a corporation, of which Sperry was a member. During part of the next ten years the hotel was conducted by the Hutchings of Yosemite Valley. In 1900 the property was conveyed to Robert Whiteside of Duluth, Minnesota, and Mr. and Mrs. Job Whiteside continued the hotel business

until the death of Whiteside. Mrs. Whiteside continued as operator of the hotel until it was deeded to the State of California in 1931.[85]

The operators of the Big Trees Hotel found it necessary to construct a telegraph line from Angels to the Big Trees in June, 1858, to dispatch messages more rapidly for the convenience of their guests.

One of the most important visitors to pass through the Big Trees was Captain William T. Sherman, later General, who with a company of three hundred men made his way east across the Ebbetts Pass by way of the Big Trees in 1862. The strangest visitors to pass through Murphys and the Big Trees were a string of nine Bactrian camels imported from Amur, China. The camels were owned by Julius Bandmann of San Francisco, who sent them to Nevada in September, 1861, to be used in transporting salt to the mines of Virginia City.

The Big Trees Hotel with the Murphys Coronet Band in the front. The hotel was destroyed by fire in 1943.

ROADS AND TRANSPORTATION

The first miners to come into Murphys walked, of course, or rode horses, but with the influx of population crude roads were constructed. When Gerstacher came to Murphys in April, 1850, he walked up the creek from Angels Camp, but his supplies were brought in by freight wagon. There was soon a demand for transportation and freight lines. One of the first stage lines to operate out of Murphys was the Dillon and Company Stage Line that operated between Murphys and Stockton by way of Vallecito, Angels, and San Andreas. In 1860 the stage left Murphys at 3 a. m. and arrived in Stockton at 3 p. m., in time to catch the boat to San Francisco. The fare to Vallecito was one dollar; to Stockton, eight dollars.

Brown's Express Company served Murphys in the 'fifties before Wells, Fargo and Company took over. They had connections with Adams and Company and through them the miners could ship gold to any place in the nation. In 1860 Wells, Fargo and Company was operating out of Murphys with E. Palache as the agent. Later on Riley Senter served as the Wells, Fargo agent.

It has already been mentioned that T. J. Matteson came to Murphys in 1850 and a little later started a stage line called the Wingdam Stage, to Angels by way of Six Mile Creek. He also built a livery stable which was burned in the fire of 1859, but was rebuilt. For the next thirty-six years he operated the stage line out of Murphys. At one time Bates was in partnership with him and later on Garland was his partner. When the railroad was constructed from Stockton to Milton, the Matteson four-horse stages ran not only to Murphys and the Big Trees, but to Yosemite. When the livery stable burned in 1893, it was not rebuilt, but Matteson continued to operate the stage line. In the 'nineties Dick and Ernest Raggio began operating a stage from San Andreas to Murphys by way of Mountain Ranch and Sheepranch. They then extended the line to Milton and began competing with Matteson for the passenger travel, and for a time the fare to Milton was as low as ten cents. Matteson had the mail contract and could make expenses without the passenger trade. However, he sold the line to the Raggios in 1895, and they continued to run it until the Sierra Railroad reached Angels from Jamestown in 1900.[86]

The Yosemite line and stages were sold to Milt Gann, and one of the old Matteson stages is on exhibition in Yosemite Valley with Milt Gann's name on it.

Murphys was the objective of many of the early emigrants to the mines in the 'fifties as they came over the Ebbetts Pass and Big Trees road into Murphys where they rested for a short time and then went on to whatever community seemed more promising.

Credit for having discovered the pass over the Sierra Nevada on the Old Emigrant or Big Trees Road is given to Major John Ebbetts in 1850 or 1851. However, Kit Carson came through this region on the south side of the Mokelumne River in 1844 when he was looking for a pass for the Fremont expedition. It has already been mentioned that Jedediah Smith may have crossed this pass in the spring of 1827.

The emigrants used this pass, rough as it was, in the 'fifties. At Big Meadows the road forked, one branch going to West Point and the other following the northern ridge of the North Fork of the Stanislaus to Murphys.[87] By the late 'fifties the road was infrequently used and became almost impassable. However, with the discovery of the Comstock Lode and the opening of the silver mines into Nevada in the 'sixties, travel again passed over this road, but in the opposite direction. Supplies were being hauled over the mountains to the mines from California, and demands were being made that the Big Trees Road be improved.

In 1862 a company of men from Murphys were granted a franchise by the legislature to build and maintain a turnpike road from the Big Trees Grove to the eastern boundary of the state. The company consisted of the following men: James L. Sperry, John Perry, P. L. Travers, John Kimball, Ephriam Cutting, Freeman Dunbar, John De Laitte, Joseph Shepherd, Volney Shearer, and Riley Senter. It was incorporated under the name of the Big Tree and Carson Valley Turnpike Company and was given the right to collect tolls, which were to be fixed annually by the County Board of Supervisors, on the road for twenty-five years. Construction work was to be started on the road within six months, and the road was to be completed within two years. The road was to be kept open and in good repair for at least six months of the year, and was to run from the Big Trees Grove by way of "Mud Springs," Grizzly Bear Valley, the Mokelumne River at Hermit Valley to the eastern boundary of California. The corporation with headquraters in

Matteson & Garland's,

Livery and Sale Stable

Murphy's, California.

Elegant Turn-outs for Calaveras Big Trees and Yosemite, at Reasonable Rates.

Murphys, had a capital stock of $100,000, divided into 1,000 shares of $100 each. James L. Sperry was president of the corporation; De Laitte, secretary, and Shearer, superintendent of construction.

The first construction work was done under Volney Shearer in June, 1862, between Black Springs and Carson Valley. Oxen were used for a time but were replaced by horses. The ordinary laborer was paid forty dollars a month and board, while a few skilled workers received fifty and sixty dollars a month and board. It was difficult to get supplies into the construction camps as they had to be carried in by pack trains. Ramon Duart had a contract to deliver supplies at three dollars per one hundred pounds. Black powder was used for blasting and great quantities were packed in on mules.

The original route of the road from the Big Trees to Hermit Valley was practically that of the present route. From Hermit Valley the original road then went north of the present road through Deer Valley, Clover Valley, Twin Lakes, Summit Valley, Faith, Hope and Charity Valley, and crossed the west Carson River to form a junction with the road to Placerville. When the silver mines were discovered and developed at Silver Mountain, Alpine County, the eastern end of the road was changed, and the route was thereafter by way of Silver Mountain and Markleeville. Apparently the company did no construction or maintenance work on the road east of Silver Mountain.

The work was continued under Shearer in 1863, but on a smaller scale. In the following year, March, 1864, the legislature was asked to extend the time for completion of the road to April, 1866. At the same time the company increased the capital stock from $100,000 to $200,000, and succeeded in getting the legislature to pass an act authorizing the Board of Supervisors to subscribe to $50,000 capital stock of the company to be paid for in county bonds. The proposal was submitted to the voters and approved by a vote of 1,750 to 290. The bonds were issued and delivered to the company which in turn issued $50,000 worth of stock to the county. However, the company had considerable difficulty disposing of the bonds and finally accepted fifty cents on the dollar for them from the Pacific Accommodation Fund Company.

The Turnpike Company entered into an agreement in May, 1864, with Harvey S. Blood and Jonathan C. Curtis of Bear Valley, whereby they were to take over the road, pay the taxes, complete the unfinished portion from Bear Valley to Silver Mountain, main-

tain the road, collect the tolls, and repay themselves with interest for what had been expended on the road. This agreement was to last for five years, and then the road would revert to the Turnpike Company. However, Blood continued to keep the road in repair and collected the tolls at the Bear Valley Station until the twenty-five year franchise expired in 1887.

In April, 1887, the Board of Supervisors granted Blood a franchise to collect tolls on part of the road in Calaveras County for a period of ten years. When Blood obtained permission from the Board of Supervisors to establish a toll gate at Gardner's in 1890, George Wood, owner of a homestead claim located three or four miles above, refused to pay tolls. Blood commenced an action against Wood in the Murphys Justice Court for the tolls due. It was transferred to the Superior Court where it was held that the franchise granted by the legislature had expired, the road had become a free public road, and the supervisors had no authority to grant the franchise to Blood. He lost his appeal to the Supreme Court.

The legislature in 1893, revised its County Government Act and gave Boards of Supervisors power to grant licenses and franchises for taking tolls on public roads when the expense of operation and maintenance was too great.

Blood again petitioned the supervisors for a franchise to collect tolls for twenty years. After successfully contesting the legality of its right to grant a franchise in the Superior Court with R. T. McCarty, the Supervisors granted Blood a franchise for eight years. In 1894, when McCarty refused to pay thirty dollars toll on some sheep, Blood brought suit, and his right to collect tolls was upheld in the Supreme Court. The franchise was renewed in 1901 for a period of twelve years, but, before the franchise expired, in April, 1910, Blood relinquished all his rights and privileges and the road became a free public road. The following year, 1911, the road was incorporated into the State Highway system and called "Alpine Highway."[88]

The state, however, took over the road only as far as the Big Trees, and the twenty-six miles from there to Angels Camp was maintained by Calaveras County. As this section of road was under the supervision of Al Gianelli, supervisor for the Murphys District, he considered it his task to get the road graded and incorporated into the state system. In 1919 the Board of Supervisors made appli-

cation to the federal government for funds to grade the road from Murphys to the Big Trees, as this was a road through a national forest and of use to the Federal Forest Service. After some difficulty over getting a survey made, the Federal Government approved the application and ordered a survey made of the route.

In June, 1923, Calaveras County entered into a cooperative agreement with the Secretary of Agriculture for construction of the road. The county was to provide $60,000. The estimated cost was $212,000. The contract for grading the road was let to a man named Crowley from southern California. The grading was not completed until November, 1926, as the work was all done by mules and scrapers.

According to the agreement with the Federal Government, the county was to provide $8,000 for a period of two years for maintenance of the road and to continue to maintain it thereafter. A bill was introduced, therefore, in the legislature providing for the incorporation of the road into the state system. The bill was passed, but Governor Richardson refused to sign it. However, after a personal interview with Al Gianelli in which the latter explained that the Vallecito route was chosen over the Angels Creek road to Altaville because more people would be served, the governor signed the bill making the Big Trees Road a part of the state system in December, 1926. In February, 1927, the State of California assumed the responsibility of maintenance. The road was surfaced by Beerman and White in the early 'thirties for $90,000.[89]

The construction of the Murphys-Altaville grade road was another accomplishment in road building by the resourceful merchants of Murphys. The first road used from Angels to Murphys was by way of Vallecito, Douglas Flat, and up the valley northeast of Douglas by the Kenney Ranch and into Murphys from the east. In 1865, P. L. Travers, who ran a general merchandise store in Murphys for many years, T. J. Matteson, and several other Murphys residents met with B. R. Prince and other residents of Altaville and agreed to form a company for the purpose of constructing a more direct road from Altaville to Murphys up the Angels Creek Canyon, if the route was feasible. T. J. Matteson, who had made the original survey for the Union Water Company aqueduct, made a survey of the proposed route in April, 1865, and found that the distance of such a road would be six miles and 116 rods, the

average grade would be less than one hundred feet to the mile, and the construction of such a road was entirely feasible.

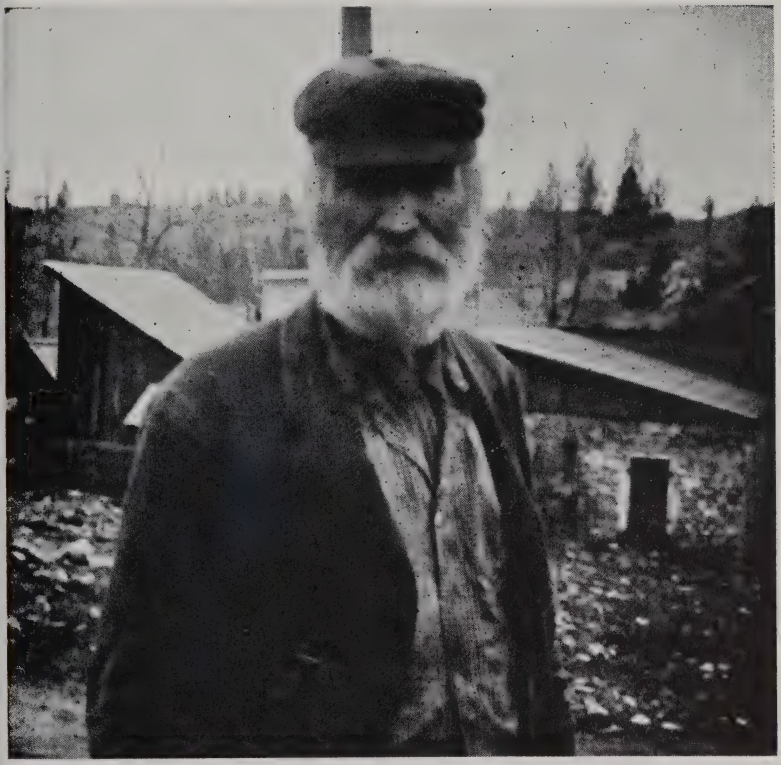
A meeting of those interested in the project was held and plans made to organize a joint stock company. A "Declaration" was published in the *Copperopolis Courier*, September 15, 1865, as follows:

To Whom It May Concern:

> We, the undersigned residents of Calaveras County and State of California hereby declare and publish our intention to organize a joint stock company for the construction of a turnpike road 18 feet in width, average grade one hundred feet to the mile. Commencing near Brewery Gulch on Main Street in the village of Murphys, 9th Township in said County, thence extending down Angels Creek to and crossing the old county road at Mr. Richards' house near Washington Flat, thence through Italian and Slab Ranches by the most feasible and direct route, terminating at Ward's Hotel in the village of Altaville, Township No. 8, and notice is hereby given that a meeting will be held for the purpose of a preliminary organization of said company in the village of Murphys on Tuesday, the 26th day of September, 1865, at 2 o'clock p. m.

It was signed by John Ward, Henry Nuninger, Fred Brunner, B. R. Prince, S. Hanchett, E. Darling, C. A. Hunt, P. L. Travers and Co., and T. M. Matteson. At the first organization meeting of the stockholders on October 6, 1865, Silas Hanchett was chosen President; P. L. Travers, Secretary; and Charles A. Hunt, F. S. Hatch, T. J. Matteson, E. Darling, and Henry Nuninger as a Board of Directors.

The capital stock of the Murphys and Altaville Turnpike Company was divided into 120 shares with par value at one hundred dollars per share. The corporate existence of the company was to be twenty years. The road was constructed and was not only a great convenience to the community, but the tolls collected made it a profitable venture for the stockholders. On September 12, 1885, the directors decided to continue the corporate existence of the company for another fifty years. At this time Joseph Oneto was the principal stockholder with 115 shares. From this time on the road was operated very largely under the supervision of Oneto. In



Old Colonel Lovelace, a driver on Matteson's stage line for many years.

April, 1893, he was granted a franchise by the Board of Supervisors to collect tolls on the road at a toll gate located at the Oneto residence in Murphys. When this franchise expired he petitioned the Supervisors for a renewal of the franchise for a period of ten years. This petition was granted on the condition that the road be kept in reasonable repair and sprinkled during the dry season when water could be obtained. Mr. Oneto operated sprinkling wagons on the road and, to supply water, constructed water tanks along its course.

This road was the favorite one for the lumber wagons hauling lumber and timber into the mines at Angels. In many places for long stretches the road was too narrow for two vehicles to pass, and turn-outs were provided where it was possible for one of the teams to get off the road and let the other pass.

Oneto again petitioned the Supervisors for a renewal of the franchise in 1911, but it was refused and the road was thrown open as a free public road. The county took over the maintenance of the road and purchased the sprinkling equipment.[90] The road was gradually improved by graveling and oiling. It was put in its present excellent condition by the Federal Government in 1943, when approximately $100,000 was allotted for widening and re-surfacing. However the road is still maintained by the county.

SCHOOLS

The first white residents of Murphys were men without families, and obviously there was no need for schools; but by 1852 the miners were bringing in their wives and families. The first report on public schools in the State of California, published by John G. Marvin in 1852, estimated that there were only twenty public schools in the state. There were none in Calaveras County and only one hundred children of school age in the county. But several private schools were in operation in Murphys before 1855. A Sister Louise operated a Catholic school on Scott Street just across the street from the present Burrows house. A Miss Powers operated a private school on the Sheepranch Road across the street from the present Catholic Church, and a Miss Vickers conducted a private school in a house located just north of the Cademartori Store on the Matt Manuel lot. Mr. Jaquith conducted a school in the first school house, which was located just west of the present Masonic Temple. This building was erected by a Mr. Parsons. When the present school building was constructed in 1860, the first school building was torn down and the lumber was used in constructing the Schwoerer house.[91] The first school house was a one-room building, painted white, furnished with desks, all handmade by local carpenters.

There is no record of the exact date the public school district was established, but it was before May 7, 1855, when the first meeting of the Board of Supervisors was held. Mr. Jaquith seems to be the first public school teacher[92] and later was assisted by Mr. Isaac Ayers.[93]

In 1857, the school had an enrollment of fifty-five children.[94] This enrollment had increased to 124 in 1859, according to the report of R. Thompson, Superintendent of Schools for Calaveras County. In that year Mr. L. W. Keye and Miss Mary A. Kelly were teachers; the trustees were Wm. Jones, Volney Shearer, and V. R. Senter. How 124 pupils could be accommodated in the small one-room school used at that time is a mystery. The present building was constructed in 1860-61. The land was donated by Dr. William Jones, and much of the work of building was donated by local residents.[95] The building cost $4,000, according to a report of Superintendent Thompson in 1861. The building was 60x40 feet and had two rooms as at present, but the back room was smaller

than the present one which was later enlarged. The seats were all built by the carpenters and were one-piece double seats. There were no trees on the hill at first, but the beautiful pines that now surround the playground were transplanted there by the school board.

A visitor to Murphys in 1860 has this to say about the school:

> "Murphys has the best school house in the county, or, indeed, anywhere in the mountains south of Nevada, except Columbia. The building is located on a hill at the south end of town. . . . It is designed to accommodate the district of Douglas Flat. I was told the cost did not exceed $2,700. It will not be ready for school purposes until May or April. The land was donated by Dr. Wm. Jones."[96]

The new building was certainly needed because the Superintendent of Schools reports in 1861 that Murphys had an enrollment of 177 pupils. San Andreas and Mokelumne Hill were the only two schools that exceeded this enrollment. The Superintendent further reports that the average school year for the thirteen schools in the county was seven months and no school was open less than four months.

The new school must have been crowded to overflowing with such a large enrollment. However, this enrollment dropped down to eighty pupils in 1862, when Mr. Jaquith was again a teacher.[97] By 1870 the attendance had again increased to 172 pupils, and the enrollment was only exceeded by that of Mokelumne Hill's 192, according to J. H. Wells, County Superintendent of Schools.

The honor roll at Murphys public school for the month ending November 10, 1861, was as follows:

> Effie Fisk, Annie Shearer, Clara Heulard, Francis Michler, Sarah Williams, Chas. Curtis, Frank Fisk, Willard Rhodes, John Carley, Winnie Rooney, Mary Shearer, Francis Vancil, Carmelita Lorrain, Lizzio Osborn, Melvin Curtis, Harry Cregs, Frank Davis, George Marshall. Whole number in attendance, 112.
>
> Signed, E. L. Knowlton and Mrs. L. A. Knowlton.[98]

The back room of the building was later enlarged to handle the increased enrollment, and in 1887 a second building was constructed for the primary grades to the east of the main building. The first teacher in this new building was Mrs. Lucy Reed. However, as the enrollment decreased, this building was no longer needed for a

The pupils of the Murphys school in 1904-5. The teacher is J. A. Smith, who is now Judge of the Superior Court.

classroom and it was town down and the lumber used to build the present storage house behind the main building.

The Murphys school has served the youth of the community for almost a century, and many youngsters, who later became important men and women, began their educational career here. One of the most famous of these was Albert A. Michelson, who became famous for his experiments with the speed of light. It was from his discoveries that Dr. Albert Einstein obtained his inspiration for his theories on relativity. He was awarded the Nobel Prize in physics in 1907. Another pupil who achieved success was Sister Lewis, who became the Mother Superior of the Dominican College of San Rafael. Both of these pupils were taught at Murphys by Miss Mary Ann Conway between the years 1857 and 1864.

Many fine men and women have inspired the youth of Murphys through their teaching. One of those who taught for many years was Enos Floyd. He came from Maine to California for his health in 1878 and taught in the Murphys school for fourteen years in the 'seventies and 'eighties, also serving as a Notary Public. Mrs. Floyd taught the primary grades and penmanship. He then transferred to San Andreas where he was principal of the school for a time and later became assistant editor of the *Calaveras Prospect.* He came back to Murphys in 1897-8 for one year before he retired. Old-timers tell how he liked to chew tobacco and tell tall tales, qualities not usually expected in school teachers, but, nevertheless, he was a successful teacher as his years of service to the community would indicate.

Superior Judge John A. Smith, of Calaveras County, taught at the Murphys school for two years in 1904-5 and 1905-6, when he was a slender young man.

Charles Snyder, who was District Attorney for the county in the 'twenties, taught school at Sheepranch and substituted in the Murphys school.

The teacher holding the record for the longest period of service at the Murphys school is W. L. Redding, who taught here thirty-two years.

Murphys Cornet Band in 1881.

Standing: 1, E. Tyler; 2, T. Doyle; 3, E. Doyle; 4, J. Carley; 5, unknown; 6, G. Davis; 7, W. Senter; 8, W. Garland; 9, J. Hiensdorff; 10, M. McCloud.

Sitting: 1, Homer Tyler; 2, M. Marchai; 3, H. Harris; 4, P. Mitchler; 5, Herbert Tyler; 6, C. Parsons; 7, E. Thorpe.

CHURCHES

Although many of the miners were rough fellows and spent their leisure time gambling and drinking, there were others who welcomed the minister and priest to their rude camps. Murphys had no minister or church before the summer of 1851. In that year Father Aleric was sent by the Catholic Church to Sonora to take over the missionary work of Father Arnault, who had come there in 1849. Very soon after his arrival in Sonora, Father Aleric set out on an inspection tour of the camps that were to be his field of endeavor. He visited Melones, Carson Hill, and Angels and then at Altaville turned off and came to Murphys where he found about 3,000 miners at work. A large number of them were Irish Catholics, who welcomed the priest into their midst. Before he left, a committee comprised mostly of Irish promised to erect a church. This promise was soon fulfilled because there was a little frame church half way up the hill when Father Slattery took over the work in 1855.[99]

There are two stories as to what happened to this first church. Elizabeth and Loretta Kaler remember hearing their mother and aunt talking about the Catholic Church which burned and which was located on the lot directly back of the present post office on the Hofstetter lot. Mr. C. P. Mitchler, who was born in Murphys and took care of the Murphys Church for many years, told a different story. He said he heard his father tell about what happened to the first Catholic Church. The story is that about 1858 the mining operations up the ravine to the north of town had reached the edge of the church property, and the miners were convinced that there was rich gravel under the church. They consulted with Father Motter of San Andreas, who was now in charge of the Murphys work, and promised him they would build a more elaborate church of brick if he would give them permission to remove the building and work the dirt. When this was done, the new church was begun almost immediately on the knoll where it now stands.[100] Dr. Jones gave the land for the church site, and the bricks for the church were made from a clay deposit which was located directly across the highway from the present Tanner Ranch house on the Big Trees Road. Although the church was begun in 1858, it was not dedicated until November 3, 1861, when Reverend Joseph S. Alemany, Arch-

bishop of San Francisco, visited Murphys and officiated at dedication services.[101] The church is still serving the faithful of Murphys after eighty-seven years.

Murphys was never of sufficient importance to have a resident priest assigned to it, but was always administered from some other church. Up to 1855 the churches on the southern end of Calaveras County had been attended from Columbia, but in July, 1855, Father Motter arrived at San Andreas and took over all the work in Calaveras County. Father Motter was the church builder, and under his supervision churches were constructed at San Andreas, Angels, Albany Flat, Campo Seco, and Murphys. He carried on the work in Calaveras County until 1862, when he was called to San Francisco to become Secretary to Archbishop Alemany. His place was taken by Father Ygnacio Yzguierdo, an exile from Mexico who could speak very little English, but who was successful because of his zeal. San Andreas remained as the resident parish of the priests who attended all the other missions in Calaveras County until 1900, when Angels Camp was large enough to have its own resident pastor. Murphys has been administered from there since that time. All of Calaveras County has been administered from Angels Camp since 1926. Father John McGuire has been the resident priest at Angels since 1932, with all of Calaveras County in his care.

It is hard to determine just when the first Protestant minister came into Murphys, or what denomination was represented. J. McHenry Caldwell, a Methodist minister who was appointed to Vallecito in 1853 and preached at Murphys and Douglas Flat also, was probably the first Protestant minister. Whether he built the first Protestant Church here cannot be determined, but the first church was built in that year. I. H. Miller was the Methodist minister in 1854 at Murphys. James McGowan seems to be the Apostle of Methodism in Murphys and supplied the church here in 1855. In 1856 there was a Methodist Church and a parsonage, but their value was estimated at only $700. There were sixty communicants and eighty scholars in the Sunday School. After 1856 there is no record of any minister being supplied to the church until 1861 when Reverend McGowan was again sent to Murphys to revive the church and save the efforts of past years. He apparently was unable to revive the church, since no one was sent from the Methodist Conference to Murphys in the following years.[102] This first little church which the Methodists built was probably the one taken over by the

Congregational Church when it was organized in 1866. The church building erected in 1853 on a site donated by Dr. Wm. Jones, at that time belonged to the Protestant Union Society.

In 1863, Reverend James Pierpont, a Presbyterian minister, was preaching in Murphys,[103] apparently holding services in the Protestant Church, as there is no record of the Presbyterians ever being organized in Murphys.

After several years of going without a regularly assigned minister, the Protestant people of Murphys wrote to Reverend J. Warren, of San Mateo, Superintendent of the Congregational Conference, and asked him to come to Murphys and organize a church. He came and preached at the church on September 14, 1866, and surveyed the possibilities of organizing a church. An organization meeting was held at the home of Mrs. James Sperry on September 23, 1866. Mr. C. Maegan was chosen clerk, and Mrs. Sperry, treasurer and chairman of the finance committee. Reverend Caleb Maegan was then ordained as the first minister. The charter members of the church were as follows: Mrs. L. J. Sperry, Mrs. S. W. Putney, Mrs. Mary Ann Scott, Mrs. Mary Williams, Mrs. M. Webb, Mrs. M. Lowman, Donald Kipper, U. L. Grover, Mrs. H. Y. Traver and Mrs. E. M. Johnson.

The first church building taken over by the Congregational Church was a brown, one-room building with a small storage room behind. It was furnished with a low organ and plain, straight benches, with a seating capacity of about fifty. This little wooden church served the congregation for forty-two years. In the year 1895, under the leadership of Reverend M. J. Luark, construction of a new church was begun. The total cost of construction was $1,600, but much of the labor and materials were donated. The present building was dedicated December 13, 1897.

The first parsonage was located where the Forrester home now stands and was burned. The church later bought the Matteson home across the street from the church for $500 and made it into a parsonage.

The Ladies Aid, which seemed to be the most active branch of the church, did the work of repairing and remodeling the new parsonage. The Social Hall was added to the church in 1935 at a cost of $700.

Of the thirty-one ministers who have been assigned to the church since 1866, Reverend Thomas Magill had the longest pastorate (1911-1927). Reverend M. J. Luark served the next longest period, but had two different pastorates. Reverend Magill was the last resident minister at Murphys. With the arrival of Reverend Frank Bissell, the Murphys church was administered from Angels. Reverend L. D. Granger has been in charge of the two churches since 1946.

Of all the many members, friends, and loyal workers who have supported the church during its eighty-two years, Mrs. Eliza Hoyt should be mentioned first. She was a member of the church for many years, and in her will she left $10,000 to the church. This money was invested in mining stock and has been a source of revenue for many years.[104]

TOWNSITE

The residents of Murphys had no legal title to their property except that of the right of preemption, squatters rights, or mining claims until 1876, when the townsite was patented.

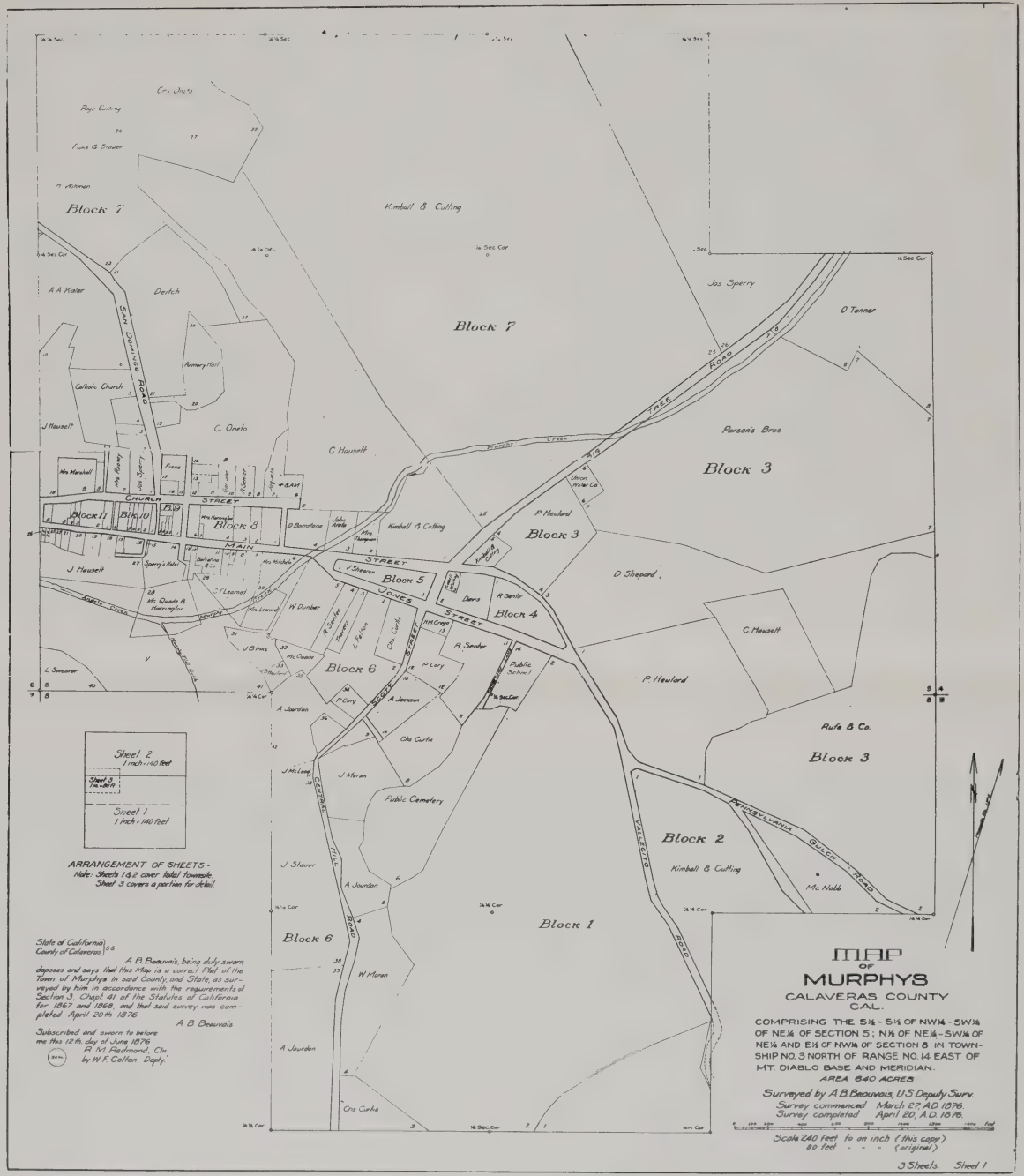
Congress passed an act on March 2, 1867, which was entitled an "Act for the Relief of the Inhabitants of Cities and Towns upon Public Land." This act provided the procedure by which towns could gain title to their property. Murphys was slower than some of the other towns in the county to obtain a patent. Angels had obtained a patent in 1872. Murphys also used a different procedure to obtain titles than did other cities in the county. The usual method was to have a survey made of the property as claimed and submit these claims to the County Judge, who made application to the federal government. Title to the land was granted to the judge as it was surveyed and he, in turn, deeded it to the claimants. When there was a contest of rights, the surveyor marked the contested area in red, and the claimants proved their rights before the court.

Murphys incorporated itself and elected a board of trustees, who applied to the federal government for the title to the land and they, in turn, deeded the property to the claimants.

On Tuesday, June 8, 1875, a majority of the qualified voters of the town of Murphys presented a petition to the Board of Supervisors of Calaveras County, setting forth the bounds of said town, with a plot of the same, and asked to be incorporated. The Board of Supervisors, being satisfied that the population of the town exceeded 200 and that a majority of the inhabitants had signed the petition, ordered the petition granted, and the town incorporated under the name of the Town of Murphys, with its boundaries defined. The board further ordered that an election be held in Murphys on June 21, 1875, to elect five trustees. T. J. Matteson, D. Baratini, and R. Senter were appointed to conduct the election. The record of the election was apparently kept in Murphys as it is not available in the county archives.

The survey and official map of the townsite were made by A. B. Beauvais, of Sonora, who made many of the original surveys around the county. The survey was completed in 1876, and a patent was issued by the federal government to James L. Sperry, President of the Board of Trustees of the Town of Murphys, on February 15,

1876, in trust for the inhabitants of the Town of Murphys. The patent contained a mineral reservation.[105] Deeds were issued to the various lot owners and the deeds executed by the trustees of Murphys and signed by James L. Sperry, President, and Levi P. Felton, Town Clerk of Murphys.[106] All the original deeds to property in the town bear the signature of these men.


MAP
OF
MURPHYS
CALAVERAS COUNTY
CAL.
COMPRISING THE S½ - S½ OF NW¼ - SW¼ OF NE¼ OF SECTION 5 ; N½ OF NE¼ - SW¼ OF NE¼ AND E½ OF NW¼ OF SECTION 8, IN TOWNSHIP NO. 3 NORTH OF RANGE NO. 14 EAST OF MT. DIABLO BASE AND MERIDIAN.
AREA 640 ACRES
Surveyed by A B Beauvais, U.S Deputy Surv.
Survey commenced March 27, A.D. 1876.
Survey completed April 20, A.D. 1876.
Scale 240 feet to an inch (this copy)
80 feet - - - (original)
3 Sheets. Sheet 1
ARRANGEMENT OF SHEETS -
Note: Sheets 1 & 2 cover total townsite.
Sheet 3 covers a portion for detail
Sheet 2
1 inch = 140 feet
Sheet 3
1 in. = 20 ft
Sheet 1
1 inch = 140 feet
State of California } ss
County of Calaveras }
A B Beauvais, being duly sworn, deposes and says that this Map is a correct Plat of the Town of Murphys in said County and State, as surveyed by him in accordance with the requirements of Section 3, Chapt 41 of the Statutes of California for 1867 and 1868 and that said survey was completed April 20th 1876
A B Beauvais
Subscribed and sworn to before me this 12th day of June 1876
R. M. Redmond, Clk.
by W F. Cotton, Deputy.
Block 1
Block 2
Block 3
Block 4
Block 5
Block 6
Block 7
Block 8
Block 9
Block 10
Block 11
Kimball & Cutting
C. Hausett
C. Oneto
Parsons Bros
Jas Sperry
O Tanner
D Shepard
P Heuland
Rufe & Co.
Public Cemetery
Public School
Mc Nabb
Deitch
Armory Hall
Catholic Church
A A Kaler
J Hausett
L Swearer
V Shearer
D Barnstone
W Dunbar
A Jourdan
J Moran
W Moran
J Slaver
Cha Curtis
Cris Jones
Pine & Shaver
Pope Cutting
T. Ahlman
Mrs Marshall
Mrs Rainey
Mrs Hitchcock
Mrs Leonard
Mrs Thompson
Mrs Quade & Herrington
Mrs Hannah
Mrs Bartlett
Mrs Lewis
Mrs Hall
Mrs Hoffman
Mrs Bell
Mrs Wilson
Mrs Lee
Mrs Jackson
Mrs Ingram
Mrs Ant
Mrs Hall
Mrs Hall
Mrs Hall

OTHER ORGANIZATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS

Although Murphys was a long distance from the actual conflict of the Civil War, the boys of Murphys felt intensely the spirit of patriotism and many of them gave up their mining to return to the east and fight for preservation of the Union. In preparation for such military activity, a militia unit called the Calaveras Light Guard was formed on May 4, 1861, with sixty-seven members. This was an infantry unit, and drilled up and down the streets of the town until an Armory Hall was constructed on the hill north of town, directly east of the Catholic Church. The main hall, or drill room, was thirty-one by seventy-one feet in size, but a dining room and ante rooms, which apparently could be opened for dances, made the entire building 170 feet in length.

Large numbers of the Calaveras Light Guards enlisted in the five volunteer companies raised in California to fight with the Union Armies. Many of the men of Company A, Second Regiment, California Volunteers, were members of the Guards.[107]

The officers which were elected at a meeting in January, 1865, were as follows: W. C. Crispin, Captain; R. S. Berry, First Lieutenant; Edward Taylor, Senior Second Lieutenant, and Louis Martin, Junior Second Lieutenant.

One of the important events in the history of the guards was that which occurred when General William T. Sherman, then Captain, with three hundred men, passed through Murphys in 1862 on his way over Ebbetts Pass to the battle fields of the east. The Calaveras Light Guards and their ladies gave a big reception for the visitors at the Armory Hall. It must have been quite a party because when General Sherman came to Murphys again in 1889 to see the newly opened Mercer's Cave and again view the Big Trees, he referred to his pleasant reception in Murphys.[108]

The Guards continued to meet and drill for many years after the Civil War had ended. There is no record as to when they disbanded, but apparently the organization died for lack of interest. George True and Ed Quist were the last surviving members of the militia.[109] However, the Armory Hall continued to be the center of social activities in the community after the militia had disbanded. Dances, card parties, and entertainments were held there. Mr. Willard of the Oro Plata Mine and his daughter, Mrs. Adams, who

owned the Kenney Ranch, rented the Armory Hall and gave a party for the people of Murphys because everyone had been so kind to them.

On one July Fourth the hall was roped off in the form of a track and a marathon race of eighteen miles was held there. There were four entrants—Jim McCleod, who claimed he had held the world record for the hundred yard dash; Andy Jordan, Dan Pillsbury, and George Chase. Jim McCloud was the first to drop out. He was a sprinter but could not hold up under the long distances. One by one the other two dropped out until George Chase was the only one left. He quit without running the full distance but won the prize.

The hall later became a skating rink and was run by David Parsons. Many of the old-timers remember the good times at the old Armory Hall.

It burned in the summer of 1896. Two little Indian boys from the *rancheria* on the hill above the Oro Plata Mine had been playing in the now abandoned building and had apparently set the fire. Before the volunteer fire department could arrive the building was destroyed. Frank Mitchler, who now operated the Sperry's Hotel, owned the building when it burned. He had bought it from Gus Castruccia, who had obtained it from George True and Ed Quist, the last trustees in charge.

The discovery of the beautiful cave north of town by Walter Mercer was almost as important an event in the history of Murphys as was Dowd's discovery of the Big Trees. The news of the dazzling beauty of the cave soon spread, and many visitors came to Murphys to visit the cave. On that memorable day, September 1, 1885, Mercer had been prospecting and was returning home tired and thirsty. He noticed some bushes near a bluff that seemed to indicate the presence of a spring. He made his way to the spot but was disappointed and sat down to rest. He noticed a crevice in the rocks from which, judging from the movement of grass near it, a draft of air seemed to be blowing. Putting his hand over the opening, he felt the draft, and began dropping stones down the crevice. He could hear them falling for a long distance and realized there must be a cave within. Hurrying over the ridge to the Oro Plata Mine, he obtained a rope, tools, and some candles and returned. After enlarging the opening, he descended about thirty feet and saw that this was not a small cave but one that would

require assistance and time to explore. He found some human bones and took one of the leg bones with him as evidence of his discovery. Upon arriving home, he waved it at Mrs. Mercer, saying, "Don't scold me for being late. I've found something today that will make us a fortune."

The next day a party was organized to explore the cave further and the wonders of the stalactite and stalagmite formations were revealed. This party did not find the end of the cave, nor has it yet been found. Walter Mercer made the operation of the cave his business and by building stairways and installing a lighting system, he was able to open up the cave to a depth of one hundred and fifty feet and reveal nine chambers which showed some of the most beautiful of the calcium carbonate deposits. He fell from a ladder while working in the cave and received an injury to his back which eventually caused his death.

Mrs. Mercer continued to operate the cave until the gas rationing of World War II so restricted travel that it was closed. In 1946, Mrs. Mercer sold the cave to Sterling Carter, who reopened it and renamed it Mercer's Caverns.

Although none of the old-timers of Murphys remember a cave being discovered near here before Walter Mercer made his discovery, the *San Joaquin Republican,* November 13, 1852, prints this interesting item:

> "Besides the beauties of nature so profusely lavished around this pretty mountain city (Murphys), she has placed also beneath the earth strange things to invite geologists and naturalists. About a mile north of the town are two beautiful caves that are as yet only partially explored. Many curious fossil remains have been discovered, such as teeth and bones of animals. One tooth found at forty feet depth was five inches in diameter and eighteen inches in length."

The present Native Sons Hall is not old in comparison with some of the old stone buildings, but it has an interesting history. It was built by the Good Templars Lodge, a temperance organization, about 1882. It was partially financed by subscription and donations, but these did not prove adequate and the Murphys Dramatic Society was formed to help pay for it. Some of the members of the Dramatic Society were: Frank Mitchler, Tom Manuel, Jim Thompson, Cook, Palmer, Willis R. Senter, Bee Matteson, Lilly Tyler, and May Matteson (treasurer for many years).

When the Good Templars Lodge disbanded a few years later, the hall was turned over to the Dramatic Society, which eventually sold it to the Native Sons of the Golden West.[110] The Native Sons were organized in Murphys, April 10, 1889, but after a few years became inactive. During this time they were meeting in an upstairs hall, across the street from the Mitchler Hotel. The organization was revived in 1905, and it was at this time that the hall was taken over. It functioned for a number of years until interest again lagged. However, the hall has been under the control of the officers of the organization since it was taken over from the Dramatic Society and they continue to maintain it.

The Ophir Lodge, No. 33, Free and Accepted Masons, has probably the longest continuous active existence of any organization in Murphys. The first meeting of the local lodge was in 1852 at the home of Mr. Turner. At this meeting a dispensation from the California Grand Lodge was accepted. Alexander H. Putney, who had served two terms as Grand Master of Masons in the Jurisdiction of Maine, was named Master of the new lodge. The lodge was chartered May 6, 1853. It met in private homes until 1860 when a building was completed on ground donated by Fred Paxton, a member of the lodge. This one-story building was razed in 1902 and the present building erected. The Ophir Lodge has had but four treasurers: B. B. Wilkins, two years; A. G. Putney, five years; Riley Senter, forty-two years, and Mathew H. Manuel, present treasurer, in his forty-seventh year.[111] The first lodge hall was a one-story building much smaller than the present building.

The Sharon Lodge, Number 86, I. O. O. F., was instituted and chartered at Vallecito, June 8, 1859. The charter members were W. Chaffen, P. G., John Batten, W. H. Kattenborn, John Price, and Allen Taylor.

When the Big Trees Lodge, Number 68, moved to San Andreas in 1881, several of its members joined Sharon Lodge and succeeded in getting it moved to Murphys. At the first meeting in Murphys, July 9, 1884, there was a membership of twelve. This soon increased until in 1906 the membership was sixty.

The Lodge first met in Murphys in rented halls, but in September, 1902, Grand Master Milton G. Gill dedicated the present building. The Amicita Rebekah Lodge helped in the financing of the lodge hall.

Fourth of July Parade in Murphys about 1900 — Left, Gold Girls; Center, Queen of Gold Girls (Annie Segale); Right, on float, Goddess of Liberty (Grace Williams). Driver of Buggy, Colombo Segale; Driver of Float, Price Williams.

The old Sperry and Perry Hotel, because of its long and illustrious history, can be called an institution. It was built in 1855-56 by James L. Sperry and John Perry and opened for business August 20, 1856. The following announcement appeared in the first issue of the *San Andreas Independent,* September 24, 1856:

> "The commodious fire-proof building lately erected by the subscribers at Murphys has been elegantly furnished throughout, after the most approved style, and is now ready for the reception of guests. Parlors and suites of rooms for the use of ladies exclusively and parties visiting the 'Big Trees' or other natural curiosities in the vicinity.
>
> "The management of the domestic department is confided to Mrs. Perry, a lady of experience. The bar is stocked with fine wines and liquors, and the larder daily supplied with fine delicacies."

Despite the claim of being fire-proof, the hotel burned in the big fire of 1859. The front part of the building was of stone and, it was thought, fire-proofed by great iron folding doors which separated it from the wooden dining room and the rear part of the building. Many of the residents had brought their valuables to the hotel for safe keeping, but even with the iron doors closed, a flaw in the construction permitted the fire to destroy the inside furnishings of the stone section of the building and all the valuables were lost. Almost immediately Sperry and Perry started to work on a new building which was completed in time for the spring travel.[112]

The hotel was never again burned in any of the fires. The big fire of 1874 burned everything up to the hotel but was stopped by its stone walls. In 1893 when the explosion burned the whole block just north of the hotel, it again was saved although the terrific heat warped the iron shutters over the windows and doors.

It has been claimed that the Sperry and Perry Hotel was called the Wingdam Temperance Hotel in Bret Harte's story, "A Night in Wingdam," but this must be an error because Bret Harte came through the Southern Mines in 1854-5, before the building was constructed.

However, many famous people have accepted its hospitality as is witnessed by the following signatures on the old register: Mark Twain, June 5, 1877; Horatio Alger, June 7, 1877; Thomas J. Lipton, September 2, 1880; C. E. Bolton (Black Bart), February

8, 1880; U. S. Grant, January 9, 1880; John J. Astor, Jr., June 30, 1878; Henry Ward Beecher, December 25, 1877; Josh Billings, March 1, 1880; Bona Liscomb (one of Napoleon's aides), March 22, 1880; E. S. and M. A. Rothchild, July 6, 1880; John Hittell, June 1, 1867, and John Bidwell and wife, September 7, 1871.

James Sperry sold the hotel to Henry Atwood, who operated it a short time in 1881 before selling it to Harvey Blood. The hotel was purchased by C. P. Mitchler in September, 1882, from Blood and soon afterwards the mother, Mrs. Elizabeth Mitchler, and the brother, Frank A. Mitchler, bought into the hotel. In 1890 the mother died and Frank bought out his brother's interest and continued to operate the hotel until his death in 1905. It was operated by Mrs. Mitchler until her death and then by the sons, Glen and Gene. However, it had been closed for several years when bought by the present owners, Mr. and Mrs. R. S. McKimins, in 1945.[113]

The hydroelectric power plant at Murphys has the distinction of being one of the first in the state and the first in the county. The first powerhouse and generator was built in 1892 by the Utica Mining Company for the purpose of deriving experience in the application of electricity for lighting and power at the Utica Mine in Angels. When this first unit was constructed, it was not known that two generators could be synchronized, and plans were made for running two sets of lines to Angels in order to carry the power from a second generator. The present stone powerhouse was built in 1899 and a second generator was installed in 1902.

At first only the Utica Mine was furnished with electricity but, as experience was gained, additional units were added and the towns of Angels and Murphys were supplied power.

The construction of the Bret Harte Sanatorium at Murphys was an important event in its history. The Supervisors of San Joaquin County were attempting to find a location for a sanatorium for the care of tubercular patients at an altitude of about 2,400 feet. When they were shown the proposed site in Murphys, after looking at several locations in Amador and Tuolumne County, it was approved. However, the director of the Tuberculosis Association, Mrs. Tate Thompson, had to approve, but when she saw the proposed location she was so favorably impressed that she gave her hearty approval. The land was purchased from John Hauselt for $11,600 in September, 1925. Ralph P. Morrell was employed as architect. Contractor D. G. Johns was the low bidder with a bid of $192,655.

However, a change from a steam heating to an electric heating system and a change in the exterior finish from rustic to stucco added approximately $25,000 to the cost.

Construction work was begun in the fall of 1926 and in October, 1927, the Board of Supervisors accepted the buildings. The sanatorium was put into operation in 1928 with the dedication services being held at the sanatorium on March 17, 1928, attended by the officials of both San Joaquin and Calaveras Counties.

Some of the residents of Murphys were opposed to bringing the sanatorium to Murphys at first for fear it would endanger the health of the local residents. However, this has not proved to be the case, and the increased business which the sanatorium and its employees have brought to Murphys has been of benefit to the merchants.

There was also opposition to the project from some of the doctors in Stockton who felt it would be an unnecessary expense, but the successful operation of the sanatorium for twenty years has proved the soundness of the undertaking.

Old Sperry and Perry Hotel. Built in 1856.

PIONEERS

It is impossible to give biographical sketches of all the important pioneers of Murphys, but there are a few that should be given special attention, such as: Dr. William Jones, James L. Sperry, Riley Senter, Volney Shearer, Alex Putney, T. J. Matteson, Charles Curtis, John Manuel, Walter J. Mercer. There are probably many others on which there is no available materials.

DR. WILLIAM JONES

Jones Street, in the center of town, might not mean much to most of the present residents of Murphys, for "Jones" is not an uncommon name, but to the old-timers and their descendants it means much, for it was named for Doctor Jones—just plain Doctor Jones—and was a household word not only in Murphys and throughout Calaveras County but along the entire Mother Lode.

Dr. Jones was an ideal family doctor. If ever the true physician and surgeon could be imagined, it was this man who, for almost twenty years, ministered to the men, women and children of this community. Not only did he drive hither and thither, night and day, to relieve the sick and ailing, but he was to everybody "guide, counsellor, and friend" as well.

He was born on April 22, 1822, in County Longford, Ireland, and received his medical education in Apothecaries Hall in Dublin. He came to New York in 1843 and left there in 1849, a young man of twenty-seven, as surgeon to a group of about 100 persons coming out to the new mining country. They traveled a route then unknown, through Texas near the Mexican border, arriving in California in October, 1849. In 1850 in San Francisco he took a prominent part in attending the victims of the Cholera Plague.

In 1851 he came to Angels Camp and in 1853 removed to Murphys. From 1853 to 1869, for sixteen busy and intense years of devoted service he ministered to the people of Calaveras County and became one of its leading and most distinguished citizens.

He married Miss Catherine Sinclair, a native of Lorraine, in San Francisco in 1856. Six of their children—three sons and three daughters—were born in Murphys; their youngest daughter was born in San Francisco. Dr. Jones became identified with many enterprises at Murphys. He had mining interest; he was one of the

founders of the Union Water Company and became its president; he was an orchardist and vineyardist, his fruit and wine products receiving awards for their excellence. Sportsmen will be interested to learn that he was instrumental in the scientific introduction of trout into the streams in these mountains. He served as a trustee on the school board and gave the land on which the new school was built in 1860. He also gave the sites of both the Catholic and the Protestant Churches. Although his interests were varied, he was first, last, all the time, the ideal physician and family doctor.

His fame became statewide as is attested by the fact that in 1862 he was appointed by Governor Leland Stanford, Surgeon (with the rank of Major) of the California Militia. About 1869 he moved to San Francisco where he at once became the leading medical practitioner in that new and growing metropolis. It was in San Francisco that his family grew to manhood and womanhood. The three sons were named William, Eugene, and Charles; the daughters were named Catherine, Mary, Amelia, and Helen.

Dr. William Jones died in San Francisco in 1891, at the age of sixty-nine, after a distinguished career in that city, as doctor and citizen—a career which commenced in these hills.[114]

JAMES L. SPERRY

James L. Sperry was one of the pioneers of Murphys and came there in the early 'fifties. He was active in almost every important community project. His main interest for many years was in operating the Sperry and Perry Hotel at Murphys. However, he became interested in the Big Trees Grove and Hotel in the 'sixties and continued his active participation in this enterprise long after he had sold the hotel in Murphys. He was one of the directors in the Murphys Fluming Company that constructed the Deep Cut for the purpose of draining the flat. His iron mine just east of town didn't develop as expected, but he was interested in mining. He promoted the construction of the Ebbetts Pass Road in the 'sixties, and was the president and a stockholder in the Carson Valley Turnpike Company.

When the town of Murphys obtained the patent in 1876, Sperry was elected president of the Board of Trustees and signed all the deeds issued to the property holders. He constructed the Sperry home on the corner of Sheepranch Road and Church Street in 1857

—which is one of the oldest houses in town.

Mrs. Sperry was one of the organizers of the Congregational Church in 1866 and served the church as treasurer and chairman of the finance committee during the first critical years.

When Sperry retired from active business life, he and Mrs. Sperry moved to Berkeley where they lived until their death.

RILEY SENTER

Riley Senter was a long-time resident of Murphys, coming to Calaveras County in 1849 and moving to Murphys in the early 'fifties. He was interested in mining and was fairly successful, at one time owning the Oro Plata Mine. He bought stock in the Union Water Company and was employed by the company as superintendent for $180 a month after completion of the ditch to the Stanislaus. For many years he owned and operated the Senter Store in the old P. L. Travers (Morley's Garage) building. When all of the west end of town burned in 1874, the stone building where his store was located was not injured. For a number of years he was the Wells, Fargo agent and served as postmaster. For forty-two years he was treasurer of Ophir Lodge, No. 33, Free and Accepted Masons, and was a member of the Murphys school board for about thirty years.

VOLNEY SHEARER

Volney Shearer came to Murphys in the early 'fifties and settled on the property where the Sears now live. He was interested in the Murphys Flat Fluming Company and was the superintendent in charge of construction. He was also an investor in the Carson Valley Turnpike Company that constructed the road over Ebbetts Pass in the 'sixties and served as superintendent of construction. He had a rich mining claim in Missouri Gulch which he worked for a number of years. As trustee of the school board in 1860, when the present building was constructed, he was responsible for the transplanting of the pine trees that now so majestically surround the building.

ALEXANDER H. PUTNEY

Alexander H. Putney came to Murphys in the early 'fifties and was very soon chosen justice of the peace of the Murphys Township. He was usually called Judge Putney. It was in Judge Putney's court

that the first trial was held in the contest over Carson Hill between the Finnegan group and the Morgan interests. He not only was justice of the peace but also was the telegraph operator for Murphys. (The Western Union Telegraph line from Murphys was extended to the Big Trees Hotel in 1871). After the fire in 1859, he built a hall which was known as Putney's Opera House. Apparently no regular shows were held there, but it was used by traveling companies and for local meetings. The opera house was on the top floor, and the lower floor housed Smith's Saloon, the most elaborate in town, and Judge Putney's office.

Judge Putney was the first master of the Ophir Lodge, No. 33, Free and Accepted Masons, when it was organized in 1853. He had previously served two terms as Grand Master of the Masons in the state of Maine.

THOMAS J. MATTESON

T. J. Matteson was one of the grand old pioneers of Murphys and ran the stage lines and livery stable for about forty years. He came to California in 1849 around Cape Horn and immediately started for the mines. It took a week to make the trip from San Francisco to Stockton by sail boat. He was always interested in gold mining, and just before his death sold his interest in a mine on the Stanislaus for $10,000. As he was an excellent surveyor, he surveyed the route for the Union Water Company ditch from the Stanislaus to Murphys in 1851. In 1865 he ran the survey on the Murphys-Altaville Road and recommended its construction as being entirely practicable.

CHARLES A. CURTIS

Charles A. Curtis came to California in 1849 around the Horn —a trip that took five months. He mined first at Hawkins Bar on the Tuolumne River, and in the following spring he came to Murphys and mined successfully in the area just behind where the Murphys Hotel now stands. With four companions he averaged twenty ounces a day. He found several seven and eight dollar nuggets, and in one panful of dirt he had twenty-four ounces.[115]

He became one of the organizers of the Union Water Company and was associated with it for seven years. For four years he was assessor and tax collector for Murphys, and for twelve years he was

James Sperry, who built and operated the hotel in Murphys for many years.

roadmaster on the Big Trees Road. He was one of the five men who spent twenty-two days felling one of the Big Trees.

His Murphys home was built in 1854 and is still being used as a dwelling. It is one of the oldest, if not the oldest house in town.

JOHN MANUEL

John Manuel was born in England and came to California in 1855. He owned the Texas Mine and operated it successfully until 1878 when he purchased a sawmill eight miles above Murphys from Kimball and Cutting. From this time until his death he was the lumberman of this area.

He married Miss Mary Williams and they had twelve children, eight of them surviving. After the father's death in 1898, the children incorporated the lumber business and other interests under the title of Manuel Estate, the eldest son, Matt H. Manuel, being chosen president and manager.

WALTER J. MERCER

Walter J. Mercer was born in Salt Lake City, February 11, 1854, and came to California with his parents, William and Amelia Mercer, when he was less than six months old. He came to Douglas Flat in 1879 and operated successfully the Old Judge Gravel Mine. In 1881 he was employed by the Oro Plata Mining Company and while working there in 1885, discovered the cave which made him famous. In 1882 he married Margarita Castruccia and they had two children, Walter and Eva.

There are other pioneers that should be mentioned, such as John Heinsdorff and his son, Joseph, Charles Fisk and his son, Frank, Austin Kaler, Abraham Vandling, E. B. Christ, John Perry, Samuel Stephenson, David Shepherd, Charles Hunt, John Hughes, Dr. Lincoln, Freeman Dunbar, John Kimball, Ephriam Cutting, David Baratini, Paul Segale, and many others, but space will not permit any further discussion of those worthy pioneers of Murphys.

NOTES

1. See pamphlet, Francis P. Farquhar, "Jedediah Smith and the Frist Crossing of the Sierra Nevada," *Sierra Club Bulletin,* Vol. XXVIII, No. 3 (June, 1943).
2. "Scenes in the Mines," *San Joaquin Republican,* November 13, 1852.
3. According to the returns in the archives at Sacramento, Stoutenberg's Diggings Precinct had the following returns: Judge, P. E. Jordon; Inspector, Wm. Brown and R. W. Frye; Clerk, Geo. W. Russel. Votes cast were: *Governor,* Peter H. Burnett, 26; W. S. Sherwood, 5; *Lt. Governor,* Roman, 52 (a resident of Murphys and later State Treasurer); McDougal, 2. *Congress,* Deret, 25; Gilbert, 21. *Senate,* Douglass, 27 (probably the man after whom Douglas Flat was named); Taylor, 20; Vermule, 18. *Assembly,* Morehead, 42; Stewart, 13; Craenor, 13; Heath, 11; Moore, 11; Buschoten, 9. Total vote cast, 56. For the Constitution, 33; against Constitution, 10.
4. Frederick Gerstacher, *Gerstacher's Travels,* p. 207.
5. John Murphy and Daniel Murphy had come to California with the Stevens-Murphys Party of 1844. The father, Martin Murphy, had first immigrated from Ireland to Canada and then to Missouri. A Catholic Priest told him of the wonderful land of California, and he determined to move his family there. This expedition was the first to bring wagons all the way to California and the first to use the Truckee River and Donner Pass Route. John Murphy was a lieutenant under Captain Weber in the Mexican war, and later became a partner with Weber in a San Jose store. Captain Weber married John's younger sister, Ellen.
6. James H. Carson, "Early Recollections of the Mines," *San Joaquin Republican,* January 21, 1852.
7. Daniel Murphy left the mines in the fall of 1848 and returned to San Jose where he bought a large ranch. He had become a wealthy stock raiser and ranch owner with ranches in Nevada and Mexico. When de died in Nevada in 1882, he was one of the greatest stock raisers in the world.—Henry Walsh, *Hallowed Were the Gold-Dust Trails,* p. 473.
8. H. S. Foote, *History of Santa Clara County,* p. 56.
9. Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of California,* VI, p. 441.
10. If there were any such relationship, it would have to be a common-law wife because John Murphy later married Virginia F. Reed, a survivor of the Donner Party.
11. Walter Colton, *Three Years in California,* p. 171.
12. G. B. Glasscock, *A Golden Highway,* p. 266.
13. Walsh, *op. cit.,* p. 473—John Murphy returned to San Jose and was chosen as the first County Treasurer of Santa Clara County and was later elected Sheriff of the county. In 1850 he married Virginia Reed and there were six children. He died in San Jose in 1892 and his wife in 1921. His last surviving child, Mrs. Murphy Howes, and his youngest, died in San Jose in 1947. He has a surviving granddaughter, Mrs. Joseph Parsons, of Hollywood, and a great-grandson, Mr. Claud Ordway, of southern California.
14. *San Andreas Independent,* May 1, 1858.
15. *Biographical History of the Counties, Merced, Stanislaus, Calaveras, Tuolumne, and Mariposa, California,* p. 154.
16. John Gaarden, *Gold Nuggets of the World,* p. 64.
17. Although gold was valued at $20 to the ounce, the miners never received this amount as the quality of gold affected the price.
18. *San Andreas Independent,* May 1, 1858. The inflated prices of supplies the miner had to buy resulted in his getting $8 to $16 an ounce for his gold.
19. Gerstacher, *op. cit.,* p. 207.
20. An alcalde was a Mexican official whose duties combined those of mayor, justice of the peace, and constable.
21. *San Joasuin Republican,* November 13, 1852.
22. Gerstacher, *op. cit.,* p. 206.
23. Judge Putney was a justice of the peace of Murphys for several years. He was also the telegraph operator for a time and, also, operated the Putney Opera House.
24. Edward Vischer, "A Trip to the Mining Regions in the Spring of 1859," *Californischer Staats—Kalender,* translated by Ruth Axe for the *California Historical Society Quarterly,* XI: 321 (December, 1932), p. 321.

25. T. J. Matteson came round the Horn in 1849 to San Francisco. He paid $50 for his passage to Stockton, which took seven days, and from Stockton to Murphys by oxcart, which took seven more. After staying a short time in Murphys, he went to Angels Camp where he mined successfully, sometimes averaging eighteen ounces a day. In 1850 he established the first stage line from Murphys to Angels, known as the Wingdam Stage. He later expanded and ran stages from Milton to the Big Trees and to Yosemite and had a large livery stable in Murphys. He sold his stages to Milt Gann in the 1890's and his stage route to the Raggio brothers in 1895. His livery stable was burned in the fire and explosion of 1893. He died in Murphys in 1902. Bret Harte's "A Night in Wingdam" had its setting in Murphys
26. These letters are in the possession of Judge Smith at San Andreas.
27. Kimball and Cutting bought up the Union Water Company stock and when the partnership was dissolved the stock was sold to Grayson and Bolling. They sold to the Utica Mining Company and the latter sold to the Pacific Gas and Electric Company.
28. Acknowledged, Sept. 19, 1857, before Alex H. Putney, Notary Public in and for Calaveras County, California. Recorded in *Book of Agreements* at pages 194-5, Calaveras County Records.
29. *San Andreas Independent*, November 21, 1857.
30. In a letter from E. Palache, Wells Fargo agent in Murphys, to H. H. Bancroft and found in *Bancroft's Scrapbook* in the Bancroft Library at the University of California.
31. In the 1880's an ambitious miner named Morris worked out a scheme to run a tunnel from San Domingo Canyon to the Murphys Mines and drain off the water. The tunnel would have come directly under the Sperry Hotel at the depth of 251 feet. However, the residents of Murphys warned him that an injunction would be gotten out to stop him, as it would also drain the water from their gardens and orchards.
32. *San Joaquin Republican*, January 23, 1862. "Snowshoe" Thompson, who carried the mail from Murphys to Genoa in Nevada, continued his trips despite the storms, but he stated that in five years' experience in the mountains of California he had never known such a quantity of snow and rain to fall. Miss Elizabeth and Loretta Kaler remember the stories their mother told them of the flood. She had just arrived in California. Provisions in the town ran short. The residents on the south side of the creek were especially distressed, and supplies were gotten over to them with difficulty, as the creek was a raging river.
33. In 1862 the Union Water Company foreclosed a mortgage on the Murphys Flat Fluming Company, given by P. L. Travers, Chas. Hunt and John Hughes. In 1866 they received a Sheriff's Deed to the property.
34. *San Andreas Independent*, November 14, 1857.
35. Edward Vischer, *op. cit.*, p. 330.
36. Gene Gardella remembers playing hooky from school by hiding and playing on the flume until school was out and then going home with the kids who were in school.
37. Jack Morley, who was a messenger for Wells Fargo, is author of this statement, and he claims it was in the records of Wells, Fargo and Co.
38. Jesse D. Mason, *Amador County, California*, p. 228.
39. W. Lindgren, *Tertiary Gravels of the Sierra Nevada*, p. 201.
40. *The San Andreas Independent*, April 17, 1858, says: "At Central Hill the claims of E. Emery and Co., C. R. Hall, and Bishop and Company are paying so well that they will soon be able to rejoin their eastern friends with a handsome fortune." So there were apparently a number of claims in the area. Emery and Co. was the construction company that built the suspension flume.
41. Mr. J. C. Scoles has in his records on the Oro Plata Mine, interesting evidence of how this district lost its value as a mining region. Lot 22, Block 7, nineteen acres, covers the placer land from the Oro Plata Mine to the Masonic Hall. It was sold by Jacob Stiver and Chas. Fisk on April 30, 1877 to Hung Poo, Poo Sung, and Ah Hum for $2,000. In February, 1879, Hung Poo and Poo Hung sold the property to Ah Hum for $1,000. Ah Hum sold to Ali Yeat in November, 1879, for $300, and in September, 1881, Ali Yeat sold the land to Page Cutting for $100.
42. Mrs. Campere, wife of Monsieur Campere, storekeeper in Murphys for many years in the stone building now remodeled into a residence at the west end of town, became despondent one night and drowned herself in the pump hole.
43. It is claimed that the street leading out to the south was once called Main Street

because most of the business esablishments were on it.

44. Fred Kenney has in the records of ownership of his ranch several references to Brownsville. Judge Shepherd told Fred Kenney that he remembered when there was a good sized village here. There was also a roadhouse and stage, as the road from Douglas Flat came around that way and into Murphys from the east rather than the south as at present. There is one lonely grave under a big oak tree there today, the only evidence left of this thriving little community.
45. *Arrastras* were a crude device for crushing ore, first used by the Mexicans. A large rock was dragged around a rock-paved and encircled area by a horse or mule, and in this way the larger rocks were broken up. After they were crushed the ore was worked free from the debris.
46. This material was obtained from Mr. J. C. Scoles, of Murphys, who has the records of ownership of the Oro Plata Mine.
47. I am indebted to Tony Malaspina and George Taylor, both mining men for many years, for most of this material on the Murphy's mines. Some of those named are owned by them.
48. The stone for most of these buildings was obtained from a quarry east of town on the Kenney Ranch.
49. This was a two-story building with the theater on the upper floor and Smith's Saloon, the most spacious in town, on the lower floor, where Judge Putney (justice of the peace) had his office.
50. Edward Vischer visited Murphys in May, 1859, and writes in 1860 of Murphys as follows: "The excellently managed hotel in Murphys has all the advantages of the one at the Big Trees. The vestibule is built of stone and is fire-proofed by great iron folding doors which separate it from the wooden dining room and the other parts of the house. (It is the more deplorable that, in the fire which later razed Murphys when the owner generously offered protection and half the population of the place brought their possessions here, nevertheless, because of a crack, the supposedly fire-proof building burnt and all therein was devoured by the flames." Written in the *California Staats-Kalender* in 1860 and published in *Quarterly* of the *California Historical Society*, December, 1932, p. 329.
51. This building is still standing and has been known for many years as Steven's Cash Store.
52. *Vick's Floral Guide*, 1873-1876, an illustrated catalogue, p. 3.
53. Carson, *op. cit.*
54. *Ibid.*
55. Gerstacher, *op. cit.*, p. 233.
56. Some historians have claimed that the first popular tribunal in the mines was at Placerville in January, 1849, but Murphys has an equally good claim to this honor. Lynch, *op. cit.*, p. 47.
57. Taken from a speech by Judge John Shepherd at the dedication of the Native Daughters Monument in Murphys as printed in an article, "Justice of the Hills," by Clark Treleaven in the *Oakland Tribune*, Sunday, October 9, 1939.
58. *San Joaquin Republican*, February 18, 1852.
59. *Stockton Times*, May 5, 1850.
60. Gerstacher, *op. cit.*, p. 220.
61. Theodore Hittell, *History of California, III*, p. 723.
62. This was the description he gave to Gene Gardella, of Murphys, many times.
63. This was the description given to Jack Morley, of Murphys.
64. See the *Stockton Record*, September 3, 1932, for a full account of Frank Marshall's story about his father's relations with Murieta.
65. Sometimes the story claims that this was his brother-in-law. See, Hittell, *op. cit.*, p. 719.
66. In an article by Edna Bryan Buckbee, "The Lion of Sonora," *Union Democrat* (Sonora), January 27, 1934, it is claimed that Garcia's name was Jack Brady and that he was a deserter from Colonel Stevenson's New York Volunteers.
67. Alex McLeod, *Pigtails and Golddust*, p. 65.
68. Two of the gang were captured—one escaped and the other was taken to Mariposa and put in jail, from which a mob took him and hanged him.
69. Taken from the *Santa Cruz Sentinel* and quoted in the *Calaveras Citizen*, October 24, 1885.
70. J. A. Smith, "Days of Old," *Calaveras Prospect*, March 16, 1945.
71. This is the story as told me by Gene Gardella.
72. *San Joaquin Republican*, November 13, 1852.
73. Kimball and Cutting owned a large amount of property in Murphys and *were the largest owners* in the Union Water Co. They also had large mine interest.

74. Elizabeth Kaler remembers how frightened her horse would get when she would meet the traction engine. She always had to get out and hold him until the engine passed.
75. Harvey Searight, "Lumber mill breaks record with A-C Equipment," *A-C Sales News,* February, 1948, p. 10.
76. John Bidwell in his memoirs, *Echoes of the Past,* p. 31, states that he thinks he saw one of the giant Big Trees when he came across the mountains with the Bidwell-Barlteson party in 1841. If he did, it must have been one of the trees in the south grove.
77. *Scenes of Wonder and Curiosity in California,* Hutchings and Rosenfeld, p. 19.
78. *Ibid,* p. 21.
79. Chas. Curtis, an early pioneer and life-long resident of Murphys, was one of these men. At that time he brought the seed and planted the large *sequoia* that now grows near the Curtis place on Jones Street. The tree must be about ninety-five years old—a mere sapling in comparison to the ages of the mother trees.
80. Hutchings and Rosenfield, *op. cit.,* p. 21.
81. This newspaper was soon moved to Murphys and was published as the *Semi-Weekly News* by Dan Yoacham and Co.
82. Cecil Burrows, who lived at the Big Trees as a boy and attended school there, says that in July, 1888, there was a big revival camp meeting at the Big Trees and the "Stump House" was used as the church. He claims that one hundred and fifty people could crowd into the house.
83. Nell Murbarger, "Frontier Folly," *Trail-R-News,* December, 1946
84. *San Andreas Independent,* December 11, 1858. However, in 1864, Sperry and Perry secured an interest held by one William G. Graham. Apparently Graham conducted the hotel business after Haynes.
85. J. A. Smith, "The Days of Old," *Calaveras Prospect,* December 22, 1945.
86. Jack Morley, of Murphys, gave me much of this information.
87. The *San Andreas Independent,* October 17, 1857, states: "On Wednesday evening last, a train of five wagons arrived in this place via the Big Tree Route. The company contained besides men, several women and children, all of whom had suffered the greatest inconveniences during the latter part of the journey. They were attacked by Indians near the head of the Humboldt and had all of their horses and a portion of their other stock stolen . . . two of their party was killed."
88. This material was obtained from Judge J. A. Smith, who gathered the material from the records in San Andreas.
89. This information was obtained from Al Gianelli, who was first elected to the Board of Supervisors from Murphys in 1915.
90. Judge Smith compiled this information from the records in San Andreas.
91. This information was obtained from Mrs. Fred Schwoerer, of Murphys. Mrs. Ann Gardella's mother, Mrs. Baratini, attended school in this little old school building.
92. Mr. Jaquith conducted a private school and was still a teacher in the public school in 1862. He owned the lot west of the Masonic Temple when the city obtained its patent in 1876.
93. Mr. Ayers was an uncle of Mrs. Nellie Sears, of Murphys.
94. *San Andreas Independent,* November 21, 1857.
95. The Misses Elizabeth and Loretta Kaler remember being told that their father, Austin Kaler, took time off from his job to help complete the building in time for school in the summer of 1861.
96. Taken from a clipping in the Bancroft *Scrapbook* at the Bancroft Library at the University of California.
97. One wonders at this decrease in attendance, but the information is obtained from a letter written by E. Palache, Wells, Fargo agent at Murphys, to Mr. Bancroft and preserved in the *Scrapbook.*
98. *Calaveras Chronicle,* November 18, 1871.
99. Henry L. Walsh, *Hallowed Were the Gold Dust Trails,* p. 68.
100. *Ibid,* p. 68.
101. *Calaveras Chronicle,* October 19, 1861, carries a story telling of the proposed dedication program.
102. C. V. Anthony, *History of Methodism,* p. 143-4. It is not clear what is meant by the statement, "Apostle of Methodism." If McGowan came to Murphys and organized the church, it must have been before 1855, when he was pastor, because

two ministers had been here previously. Perhaps the church was more firmly established because of his efforts.

103. Bancroft *Scrapbook.*
104. This information about the Congregational Church has been obtained from the records of the church and from personal interviews with Mrs. W. Mercer and her daughter, Mrs. Eva Stephens.
105. The patent is on record in Volume Ż of deeds on pages 25-26-27 of Calaveras County Records. I'm indebted to Judge Smith for looking up the material.
106. It may surprise some people in Murphys to learn that the town is incorporated. But all the records kept by the trustees have been lost—possibly in the fire that burned Judge Shepherd's house—and there is no way of knowing how long the trustees continued active or if their function was completed with the issuing of the deeds.
107. *Calaveras Chronicle,* January 18, 1865.
108. *Calaveras Citizen,* October 10, 1889.
109. Fred Fisk remembers the blue uniforms and caps used by the Guards.
110. Mrs. W. R. Senter (May Matteson) sent me this information. At the time she wrote the letter she was the only surviving member of the Murphys Dramatic Society, but since then she has passed on.
111. This information was furnished by Floyd Bowman, present secretary of the lodge.
112. Edward Vischer, *op. cit.,* p. 329.
113. Mrs. Jack Morley, of Murphy's, tells the story of her mother, Aime Lennen, being escorted to a dance at the Sperry's Hotel by James Sperry soon after it was opened in 1856. The ball room was on the second floor. Miss Lennen came to Murphys in 1853 and at one time was the only white, unmarried girl in Murphys.
114. The Jones house in Murphys was on Jones Street, located where Mr. and Mrs. Foster Peek now live.
115. *Representative Citizens of Northern California,* Standard Geneological Publishing Company, p. 546.

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